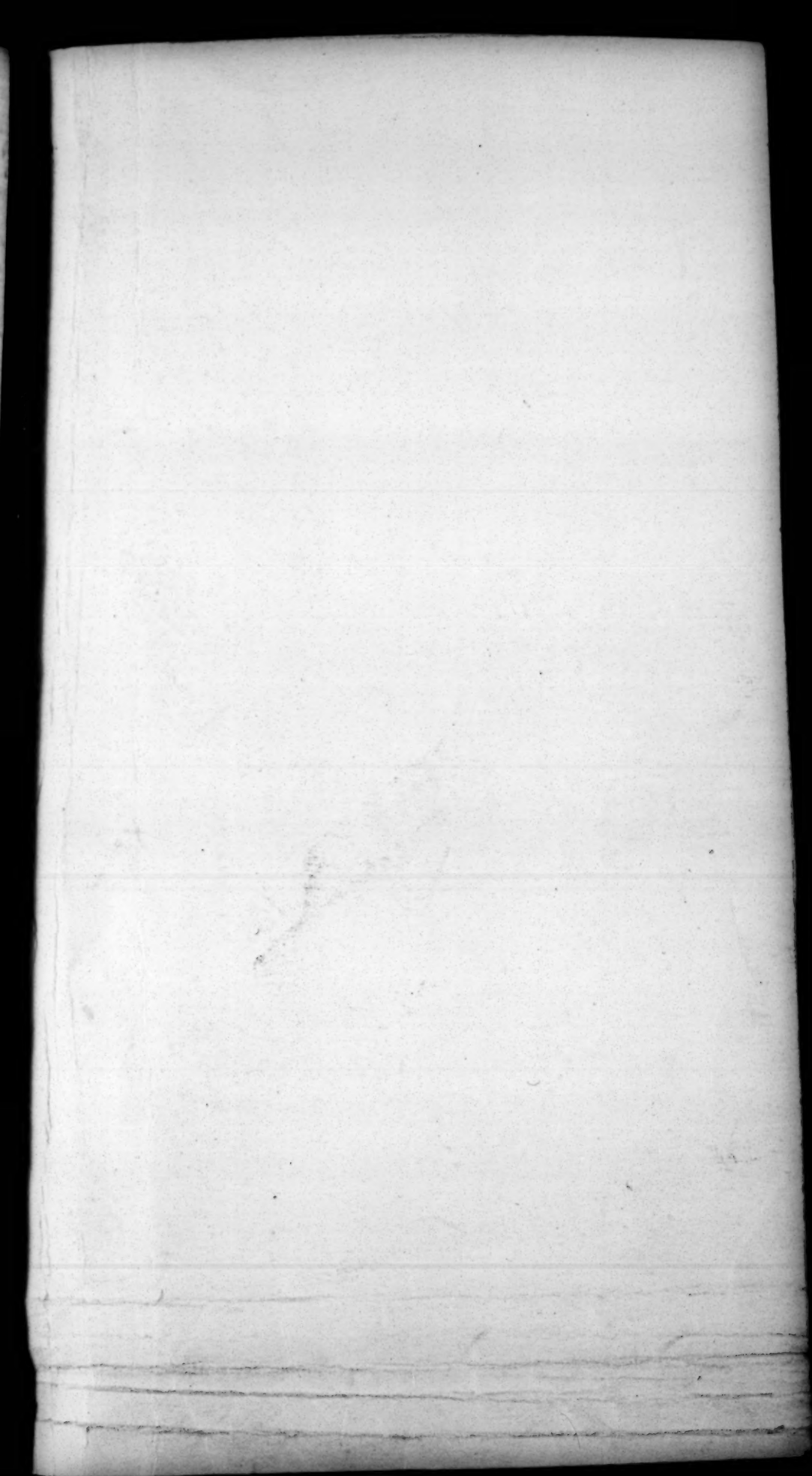




T H E
Occasional Miscellany,
I N
P R O S E and V E R S E.

CONSISTING OF,
A VARIETY of LETTERS,
Written originally to a
YOUNG GENTLEMAN

Who DESIGN'D to go into
H O L Y O R D E R S;

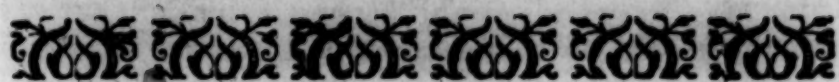
With a SPECIMEN of
SACRED POETRY and SERMONS.

V O L. II.

By *J O H N W A L L I S*, A.M.
late of Queen's College, Oxford.

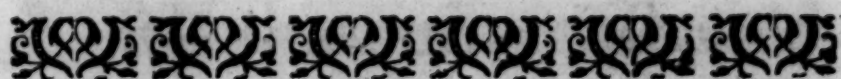
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T H E

S E R M O N S.



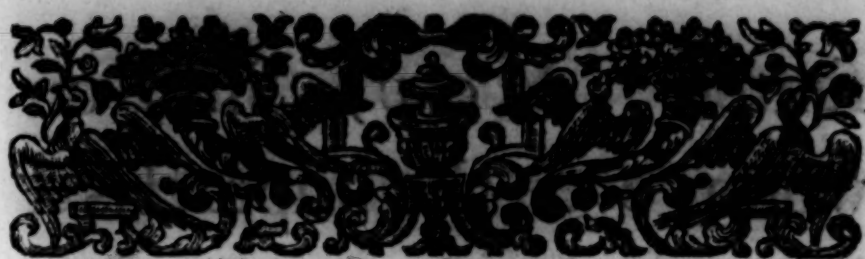
THE NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES

T H E



THE NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES

OF THE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



To the REVEREND

Mr *W A S T E L L*,

Rector of SIMONBURN.

Reverend Sir,

I CONGRATULATE myself that, unaccustom'd as I am to make Addresses of this publick Nature, such a Subject, such a Theme as yourself has pre-

I

sent-

ii DEDICATION.

sented : Y o u, Sir, on
whom even the unpractis'd
Tongue must dwell with
such Rapture, as to be at
a Loss rather where to stop,
than how to begin : Y o u,
who never have been de-
tain'd by Interest, or Indo-
lence, distracted by Plea-
sure, or diverted by Sleep
for so many Years from the
Offices of Friendship and
Humanity : Y o u, who
spend the recollective Hour
in

DEDICATION. iii

in the pleasing Review of these Virtues, while others are pursuing the Views of Interest, exploring new Pleasures, new Preferments, are reposing the Body, or unbending the Mind in Feasting, in Quadrille and Diversion.

H A D not your Mind, Sir, been enlighten'd by the SUN of SCIENCE, you must have enjoy'd, by the almost divine Intelligence
of

iv DEDICATION.

of your own Nature, every good Quality, every amiable Virtue, and of yourself have acquired the Love and Veneration of Mankind : But now this intelligent improvable Nature is assisted by polish'd Education, and regular Study, we see the lovely Ideas you have drawn from their Excellence, by which you have regulated your Conduct both as a Minister and

a

DEDICATION. v

a Magistrate, and at once improv'd your Head and your Heart. Important Lesson to the GREAT! to teach them what Merit there is in an exalted Mind or an inward Grandeur of Soul, which gives Majesty and Splendor to every Thought, Action, or Discourse.

I SHOULD enlarge upon this Topick, but what I express is, I am afraid, un-

vi DEDICATION.

unequal to what I feel; and I forget that my Business at present is not to search for Materials, but to set Bounds to my Dedication; and if I err in any Extreme, it shall be that of too much Caution, rather than too little Prudence. For I would not willingly offend the Delicacy of that Virtue I so ardently desire to do Justice to.-----There may be something in the Dignity of Persons rais'd
very

DEDICATION. vii

very high above the Rank
of other Men, which may
set them at, perhaps, too
great a Distance from the
Love of their Inferiors, and
make us often pass them
over with a silent sort of
Disregard, especially if
they are such as OTWAY
describes,

*—Who perch'd on Fortune's Top,
Sit only watchful with their heavy
Wings*

*To cuff down new-fledg'd Virtues
which would rise
To glorious Heights, and make
the Grove harmonious.*

BUT

viii DEDICATION.

BUT he who in a Station thus exalted above the Wants and Miseries of Mankind, can feel them with the Tendernefs of an Equal, while he relieves them with the Beneficence of a Superiour; whose Heart is as open to the Sentiments of Urbanity and Benevolence, as his Mind to the Impressions of Truth and Justice; such a Person, on all Occasions, deserves our utmost
Fe-

DEDICATION. ix

Felicitations and Applause,
and he need not blush to
be follow'd thro' his Hours
of Retirement, or view'd
in the milder Light of do-
mestick Life.---I shall only
add, Sir, that if any Efful-
gence beams from the Pa-
ges of the following Work,
it must be owing more to
your Patronage, which in
the humblest Manner it
sues for, and the Candour
of the good-natur'd Rea-
der,

x DEDICATION.

der, than any Merit in the
Composer.

I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your much obliged,

And most obedient

Humble Servant,

JOHN WALLIS.

3 AU 59

THE



T H E

P R E F A C E.

IT is very observable, that there is hardly any Topick more discoursed of by the CLERGY to the People, than that of the Necessity of bringing all our Actions under the Rules of Religion, and making the Wisdom of the Christian Spirit be the visible Exercise and Demonstrations of our LOVE to GOD;

a

and

ii P R E F A C E.

and yet, I believe, there is none
less put in Practice than this very
Thing. 'Tis ordinary to see Men
go to Church, and even fearful of
being absent from thence; and yet
see them spend all the rest of their
Time by Humour or Chance, just
as if they never had been there, or
had heard nothing at all that con-
cern'd them. And if you was to
ask them the Reason of their not
living to such Ends as are suitable
to the Glory of God, and why their
Lives are not of the same Nature
with their Devotions, full of the
same excellent Spirit, the same Wis-
dom, the same Holiness and hea-
venly Tempers, they immediately
would

would tell you, that they live as well, and as much unto God, in all the ordinary Occurrences and Actions of their Lives, as the PARSON of their Parish does; (very seldom does their Christianity afford him a more respectful Appellation) and that they matter not what is said about Wisdom or Religion, as long as they are sure they act as wisely and religiously as he, meaning their MINISTER; and, besides, (say they) if there was any such Necessity for bringing all our Actions under the Rules of Religion, or any Excellency or Wisdom in being of such a Spirit as you talk of, surely! our PARSON would live

iv P R E F A C E.

live otherwise than he does. 'Tis true, we often hear him commend these Things hugely in his Sermons ; but we do not discover that in his ordinary Life he aspires much more after it than ourselves.

THUS, you see, how malapert People are in their Replies, when they are ask'd to account for their unreasonable and absurd Ways of Life. You no sooner can advise them to live by Reason, to study the Perfection of their Natures, to model and frame their Lives according to the Doctrines of our BLESSED SAVIOUR and his

A.

P R E F A C E. v

APOSTLES, to prescribe Rules and Ends to every Action that relates to common Life, to let the Wisdom of the Christian Spirit be the visible Exercise and Demonstration of their LOVE to GOD, to live as primitive Saints in spiritual Watching, in holy Fear, and heavenly aspiring and earnest longing after Immortality; I say, you can no sooner tell them of the Practice of these Things, but they think you talk *exceeding strangely*, and that you seem, like St PAUL at ATHENS, a setter forth of odd kind of Doctrines; and instead of returning you a modest Answer, bid you look at the CLERGY, think-

thinking thereby to stop your Mouth at once.

THE Truth is, these People perceive that some of the Clergy in their Way of Life, their usual Manner of spending their Time and Fortunes, their Inquietudes, Cares, and Fears, in their Recreations, Pleasures, and Indulgences, in their spiritual Labours, daily Business, and Devotions, they are not much unlike the rest of the World. This is it that makes the LIBERTINE and the FOP, the careless and inconsiderate Part of Mankind, set so little Estimation on the exact Piety and regular Devotions of industrious

ous Clergymen, because they see the Devotions of others extend no farther than the reading of Prayers, and preaching of Sermons; (and those they alledge sometimes are none of their own) and when divine Service is over, they live no more unto GOD, till the Time of performing it returns again; but live by the same Humour and Fancy, and in as full a Fruition of the Follies of Life as other Men—No Wonder then that Ministers, the Messengers of the King of Heaven, meet with so little Respect in the Discharge of their sacred Employment! They do not ALL burn, it seems, with Zeal for the

viii P R E F A C E.

the Salvation of Souls, and study to redeem Children unto GOD: Some of them appear to have no other Spirit of Religion but that of occasional Worship; their chief and ruling Tempers, 'tis said, if examined according to the main and greatest Articles of their Lives, or the most glorious Doctrines of the Gospel, have but little of the Spirit of an APOSTLE; but little Conformity to the Wisdom, Purity, and Holiness of the Christian Spirit; but little heavenly Love, suitable to the high Expectations of another Life; but little Humility, but little POVERTY of SPIRIT; tho' 'tis recommended by our SAVIOUR as the

P R E F A C E. ix

the noblest State of the Soul of Man; but little Forbearance and Long-suffering, but little Condescension to the Weaknesses and Infirmities of their Brethren, but little Love for their Excellencies; give but little Encouragement to their Virtues, but little Relief in their Wants; have little Rejoicing in their Prosperity, and, in a Word, as little Compassion in their Distress.

THESE may be some of the many Reasons, perhaps, why the Names of PARSON, PRIEST, and LEVITE, are become Names of Reproach, and a BYE-WORD amongst the People.

x P R E F A C E.

PALMERIUS (they tell you) is a sober temperate Clergyman, of considerable Preferment in the World, but of little Reputation with his Parishioners; his Living being about a Hundred Pound a Year, he has farmed it out to a poor Tenant, for Forty Pounds more than any Tenant could possibly pay, and keep Body and Soul (as we say) together comfortably. As he has two Churches that require Attendance once at each Place every *Sunday*, and he does not chuse to reside there himself, but rather fix or seven Miles from it; so he makes it Matter of Conscience to maintain a Curate that is as little beloved as himself,

self, of the same Tempers, and equally vain in his Desires; whom he hires to look after the Souls of a large Parish, at as low and reasonable a Rate, as a Man of notorious Temperance can be had.

PALMERIUS has a great Value for our present Government, and a like Esteem of our Common Prayer, is reckon'd very orthodox in his Discourses; and as often as he visits his Parish, (which is as often as he has Rent to take, or the Holy Sacrament to administer) he is commonly very laborious in giving them a good Sermon out of BRADY or TILLOTSON, to convince

xii P R E F A C E.

vince his Hearers of the Necessity and Importance of *running the Race that is set before them.*

PALMERIUS has had no great Reason (they say) to complain of ill Fortune in the Course of his Ministry; only he has had those Inquietudes, Cares, and Fears, that they have, who are worldly or earthly-minded in their Employments, and are carried on with vain Desires and covetous Tempers. The Stubbornness and Ill-nature of his Parishioners, the Neglect and Remissness of his Predecessor, the Torment, Uneasiness, and Vexation he had in ejecting an old Tenant, are
after,

often the Subjects of his Conversation; and tho' he enjoys better than Two Hundred Pounds a Year, yet the want of higher Preferment is a great Pressure upon his Spirits.

PALMERIUS is full of Esteem for Shew and Equipage, and fine Buildings. He has lately consumed some Part of his Wife's Fortune in erecting a new Structure to the End of his Parsonage-House; not with a Design ever to live in it, but for his better Appearance as often as he comes among his Parishioners; and is now very angry at the Builders of the old Dwelling for placing the Windows towards the Church-Yard,

xiv P R E F A C E.

Yard, it being so melancholy a Sight, he says, never to have any thing before one's Eyes but TOMBS, GRAVE-STONES, and REPOSITORIES for the DEAD.—He cannot endure it, and therefore is resolved to turn them another Way.

Now if you was to wait upon PALMERIUS at his House, (they tell you) you would find him the Companion of the filliest People in their most silly Pleasures, fond of every impertinent Entertainment and Diverfion, full of Esteem for Quadrille, a great Admirer of Plays, and most of the ludicrous Pamphlets that come from the Press,

P R E F A C E. xv

Prefs, an admirable Lover of an *idle gossiping* Conversation; and if there is any Misrepresentation of the Character of a Person, or any ill Report that tends to the Diminution of his good Name, or the Prosperity of his Condition, against whom he allows himself in foolish Hatreds and Resentments, you may be sure it loses nothing by being told by PALMERIUS; nay, if nothing can be said in Prejudice of the Party so disrespected, PALMERIUS will most commonly trump up something or other, to tell those with whom he lives in foolish Friendships and Fondnesses; who are no sooner behind his Back but they

xvi P R E F A C E.

they laugh at him, to see his poor vulgar Way of Resentment. — But the best of it (say they) is, PALMERIUS never swears any, or utters any Oaths, unless it is upon Occasion, when his Coachman and Servants do not please him; and then no more than becomes a Gentleman of his Spirit and Distinction.

AGAIN, (they tell you) if you was to be with PALMERIUS but for one Day, you would hardly miss of hearing him tell of the Beauty, Fashion, and Richness, of the Furniture of his House; of the Neatness and Regularity of his Gardens; the Commodiousness of his Summer-

mer-House, and the Loveliness of his Fish-Ponds ; nay, sometimes he would be so trifling as to tell you of the Quantity of his Poultry, how he rises early every Morning to feed them, and which Chicken he designs to kill next.

THUS, you see, what a Mixture of Ridicule the World observes in the Life of PALMERIUS ; and what sort of Conclusions are drawn from it is but too evident. Men are glad to find their Teachers set them such Copies in Vice and Immorality ; and are never so well pleas'd, as when they find such as

PAL-

xviii P R E F A C E.

PALMERIUS give them a Plea
for their Sins.

BUT now, if such as PALMERIUS, to be *even* with the World, would but renounce all their evil Habits and Tempers, and idle Dispositions, their Fondness for great Preferment, Shew, and Distinction, their Self-Love, Pride, and Indulgence, their foolish Friendships and groundless Hatreds, their Levity of Mind and trifling Spirit, their vain Ways of consuming their Time and Money, their Love for silly Diversions and corrupt Conversation; would they but deny themselves the Practice of these Things, and
pro-

propose to themselves the Example of some primitive Clergyman in the Church, who lived in its best and purest Ages; who durst not allow himself in the Indulgence of any, even the least of these Tempers; how soon would they redeem the dying Honour of the Priesthood, restore its ancient Purity, stop the Mouths of careless and worldly Men, and make the Ministry become again a glorious Ministry? Then beautiful would be the Lives of those who attend at the ALTAR of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST; then the People would have no Reason to complain, unless it was, because they

xx P R E F A C E.

they could not serve, praise, and glorify G O D enough.

I C O U L D wish that Men of known Wisdom, Power, and Authority, would (in Imitation of our B L E S S E D L O R D) dare to break through all the irreligious Customs, Derisions, and Oppositions of the World, and speak more zealously of G O D and Religion, and more heartily of serious Truths: For, by this, they would highly promote the Christian Cause, and gradually recover the Primitive Holiness, and Apostolick Stedfastness; by this, they would fill Heaven with Saints, and finish a Kingdom of eternal
Glory

P R E F A C E. xxi

Glory unto G O D. In a Word, by this they would confirm and edify good Men in their Piety, and insensibly work upon evil ones; for by setting before them such a regular and uninterrupted Pattern of Virtue and Goodness, they would either be inclined to imitate it, or, at least, be restrained from being so barefacedly wicked, and so scandalously abandon'd, as now they are.

Glory give God. In a Word, by
this they would continue and edify
good Men in their Piety, and in-
finitely work upon evil ones; for
by seeing others that such a virtue
in and ministered to Patterns of
Virtue and Goodness, they would
direct be inclined to imitate it, or
at least be restrained from being
so wicked, and so for-
getfully abandoned, as now they

3 AU59



T H E
C O N T E N T S.

S E R M O N I. II. III.

THE Practice of Religion recommended, from its natural Tendency to promote our present as well as future Happiness, and the Divineness of its Original. Page 1

I T I M. iv. and part of the eight Verse.

But GODLINESS is profitable unto all Things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.

S E R M O N IV.

INNOCENCY, the only proper QUALIFICATION for HEAVEN. 75

L U K E xviii. 17.

Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the

d

KING-

ii C O N T E N T S.

*KINGDOM of GOD as a little CHILD, shall in
no wise enter therein.*

S E R M O N V.

A religious Life the best Return for a national
Deliverance :----Preach'd Oct. 9. 1746. being the
Day appointed for the Publick Thanksgiving after
the Defeat of the Rebels,

97

P S A L. xviii. 47, 48, 49.

*It is GOD that avengeth me and subdueth the
PEOPLE under me.----He delivereth me from
mine ENEMIES: Yea thou liftest me up above
those that rise up against me: Thou hast delivered
me from the VIOLENT MAN.----Therefore will
I give Thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the
HEATHEN; and sing PRAISES unto thy
NAME.*

S E R M O N VI. VII. VIII.

THE principal Causes of PRIDE, and its Ef-
fects, as discoverable in human Nature, confi-
dered.

121

PROV.

C O N T E N T S. iii

PROV. xxx. 13.

THERE is a GENERATION, *O how lofty are
their EYES, and their EYE-LIDS are lifted up.*

S E R M O N IX.

CANDOUR and mild Humanity recommended,

191

GAL. vi. 1.

BRETHREN, *if a Man be overtaken in a FAULT,
ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the
Spirit of MEEKNESS, considering thyself lest
THOU also be tempted.*

S E R M O N X.

ROUGH unpolish'd Manners destructive to
the Peace of Society.

221

PROV. xv. 1.

SOFT Words turn away Wrath; but grievous
Words stir up Anger.

S E R M O N XI.

THE Duty of giving Alms chearfully to the
Poor recommended.

245

ROM.

R O M. xii. 8. latter Part.

*H E that sheweth MERCY with CHEARFUL-
NESS.*

S E R M O N XII.

*T H E Danger of Faction, and bandying into
Parties, with the proper Methods of allaying them,
considered.*

273

G A L. V. 15.

*B U T if ye bite and devour one another, take HEED
that ye be not consumed one of another.*



S E R-

3 AU 59

E R R A T A.

*In some Copies, Page 3. line 2. after 1 TIM, read iv. Page 99.
line 3, for Psal. viii. read xviii.*



T H E
PRACTICE of RELIGION
R E C O M M E N D E D,
From its N A T U R A L T E N D E N C Y to promote
Our Present as well as Future Happiness,
A N D
The D I V I N E N E S S of its O R I G I N A L;
In T H R E E S E R M O N S.







S E R M O N I.

I TIMOTHY, *and part of the 8th Verse.*

*But GODLINESS is profitable unto all Things,
having the Promise of the Life that now is, and
of that which is to come.*



GODLINESS comes strongly recommended to our Practice, when Rivers of Pleasure are placed on her Right Hand, and in her Left Riches and Honour. Rewards are always look'd upon as great Incentives to act well in the various Scenes of Life ; and, one would imagine, that Mankind would endeavour, in some Measure, to make their Goodness proportionable to the present Good they receive, or to the Reward in Reversion. But notwithstanding the several

2 THE PRACTICE OF

veral Promises of present as well as future Happiness made to the just and upright Man in Scripture, and tho' Men perceive, that then they are the most happy, when they act up to the Dictates of unbiass'd Reason, and follow the Precepts laid down in the Gospel; and tho' they have the sure Word of GOD, that Piety will be finally rewarded in another World; yet, for all this, Men will forsake the Paths of Wisdom, whose Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace, and pursue, what is the very Reverse of Godliness and religious Wisdom, Folly and Irreligion. Were Men once induced to think, that Godliness is great Gain; that it gives Health to the Body, and Marrow to the Bones, and gives, what nothing in this Vale of Tears will afford, Peace and Tranquility of Mind; we might then expect in the moral World, what always obtains in the natural, Harmony and an Uniformity of Action. But some, as if Piety tended to nothing but the Propagation of Misery in the World, pursue what they think the most consummate Happiness, the deceitful Paths of sensual Pleasure. Such, indeed, shew
Signs

RELIGION RECOMMENDED, 5

Signs of Joy, but are never truly joyful: Even in the Midst of their Jollity and lewd Mirth the Heart is sad; and they cure, at least they endeavour to cure themselves of, what is the peculiar Privilege of a reasonable Man, REFLECTION. Their Mirth indeed is like a STORM, loud, and not lasting. They run from Toy to Trifle, from Vanity to Vice, and run thro' the whole unsatisfactory Circle of Amusements, in order that they may more effectually forget the Design of their Creation, and the very End of their Being.

BESIDES these Sensualists, some there are, who having the Form of Godliness want the Power of it. Such as these the Apostle, in some Verses preceeding my Text, bids TIMOTHY reprehend. These Men forbid to marry, and commanded to abstain from Meats, and were more careful in the Observance of some Ceremonies, than in the Cultivation of the substantial Duties of Christianity. Such senseless and fabulous Traditions of these Jewish Teachers TIMOTHY is exhorted to reprove and discountenance; because bodily Exercise, that
is,

6 THE PRACTICE OF

is, external Observances, which they pretend to be so strict in, profit little, and are of no Moment in true Religion; whereas GODLINESS, that is, the Practice of all Christian Graces, has all possible Advantages, having the express Promise of the Life that *now* is, and of a certain Reward in the *next*. From the Words thus explain'd, and in order to encourage you in the Practice of religious Wisdom, I shall consider these following Propositions:

I. THAT RELIGION has a direct Tendency to promote our present Happiness in this Life.

AND II. That such a Religion, that has such a Tendency, carries an internal Evidence of its Divinity along with it;

AND therefore, III. It ought to be embraced, not only upon account of its Divinity, or future Rewards it proposes, but because our Happiness, even in this Life, is consulted by it.

I. THEN

RELIGION RECOMMENDED. 7

I. THEN, I am to consider that Religion has a direct Tendency to promote our present Happiness in this Life.----As our Duty to GOD, our Neighbour, and ourselves, is comprehended under the Word RELIGION, I shall endeavour to shew how our present Happiness is promoted by a strict Observance of each of these Duties.----And, *first*, with respect to GOD.

GOD is a Being from whom we have received every *good* and *perfect* Gift ; in whom we live, and move, and have our Being. We are indebted to him for our Creation, Preservation, and more particularly for our Redemption. No Wonder then, considering the great Advantages we have received from him, that he has exacted from us Obedience to his just Commands : and that he might encourage us, his rebellious Creatures, who are more prone to Evil than Goodness, in the Way that leads to Eternal Life, he has so blended our Duty with our Interest, that we cannot neglect the former without manifestly losing the latter. Wou'd we enjoy Riches, Honours, and the several

ral

8 THE PRACTICE OF

ral Blessings of Life? And wou'd we make our
 very Enemies to be at Peace with us? We have
 our Saviour's own Word for it, that if we seek
 the Kingdom of GOD, and his Righteousness, all
 other Things shall be added unto us: and if we
 return Good for Evil, and Benefits for Works of
 Malice, we thereby heap Coals of Fire upon our
 Enemy, and melt him into Kindness, Benevo-
 lence, Friendship. Wou'd we enjoy Contentment,
 Peace of Mind, and a Conscience void of Offence,
 which is the only Happiness in this State of Mi-
 sery? If we honour GOD, and keep his Com-
 mandments, we shall be content, and our Minds
 serene, undisturbed with bitter Reflections, and
 freed from the Gnawings of a troubled Conscience.
 CONSCIENCE must be a troublesome tormenting
 Companion to the Wicked, but unto the Godly it
 is Health, and the Balsam of Life. When Storms
 arise, and Poverty comes upon the good Man,
 like an armed Man; when Friends, those Beings
 of a Summer's Day, forsake him in his Adversity,
 and leave his cooler Shade for the warmer Habita-
 tion of the Son of Fortune; or when Detraction
 and

RELIGION RECOMMENDED. 9

and Envy, those malicious Attendants upon Goodness, wou'd blacken the Reputation of the good Man; or when, in short, natural Evil, under Variety of Shapes, makes his Days uncomfortable, and his whole Life a Burthen; even in these Scenes of Horror, and severe Hours of Trial, the good Man's Confidence is in the LORD his GOD, who is his present Help in Time of Trouble, and Rock of Salvation in the Day of Calamity. He considers these light Afflictions as Marks of GOD's Love and paternal Tendernefs, inflicted not only upon Account of the many Failings he is by Nature liable to, but in order to awake the sleeping Sparks of Piety in him, which in the Day of Prosperity are too apt to be nigh extinguished. DAVID thought it an Happiness when he was afflicted; for then he turned to GOD, and called his Ways to Remembrance. Thus he obtain'd, what some thoughtless Libertines at the solemn Hour of Death would give the whole World to obtain, Peace of Mind, and a pleasing Prospect of future Happiness in the Mansions of the JUST.

GOD too, besides the Prospect of an eternal Weight of Glory, has annexed to our Duty of loving him, a secret, internal, intellectual Pleasure. This Self-complacency every good Man enjoys; which makes him with the greater Steadiness embrace the one Thing needful. We are never better pleased than when we are grateful for Benefits received; we cannot help expressing our Joy by the Serenity of our Countenances, and our inward Tranquility by our outward Demeanour and Expressions of Thankfulness. If Gratitude be attended, as it certainly is, with such Pleasure rather to be conceived than express'd, when 'tis performed towards our Fellow Creatures, what must the Pleasure be when GOD, our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer, is the Object of our Gratitude? Then for want of Words to signify the Greatness of the Favours conferred upon us, and to demonstrate our Incapacity to give GOD his due Praise, and proper Honour, we melt into an affectionate Tendernefs, are ravished with the superabundant Goodness, and are lost in Thought and silent Wonder. This is a Joy the Good, the

re-

RELIGION RECOMMENDED. 11

religious FEW only know. The Wicked, that either deny GOD in Speculation, or forget him in Practice, are utter Strangers to this still, permanent, unspeakable Joy. Their Joy, like a DREAM, or the MORNING DEW, passeth away, and is gone; and even the Recollection of such Joy resembles oft too much the frightful Appearance in some Dream, which never occurs to the Imagination without Horror.

THE good Man's Happiness is best illustrated by drawing a Portrait of the wicked Man's Condition.

WERE Happiness attainable solely by Impiety, and were it proportionable to a Man's Proficiency in Wickedness, there would be then some Temptation to live without GOD, at least without supposing a superintendant Being, in the World. But as Things are now constituted, it is our Interest to be pious. The wicked Man, notwithstanding his Commission of Wickedness with Greediness, yet, in his more serene Hours, when Conscience is suffered

ferred to act the Judge, declares that he has no Pleasure in Sensuality. His Appetites are strong, craving, restless. Indulgence strengthens them; Enjoyment makes them craving; and continual Exercise upon unlawful Objects, makes them restless, and never to be satisfied. Pleasure is generally the Object of the Appetites; but Pleasure, like QUICKSILVER, eludes our utmost Skill; and, grant it is obtained, what is it but rank Poison in our Veins? Moral is generally productive of natural Evil. Gluttony produces a complicated Scene of Disorders, Variety of Pain, Torture, Woe. The Drunkard takes his Glass with a quivering Hand. The lascivious Man is a living whited Sepulchre, whose inward Parts are one continued Scene of Misery, Corruption, Rottenness; and, what is the most lamentable of all, his Soul, because of its intimate Union with the Body, contracts a greater Impurity. But supposing the wicked Man not intemperate and luxurious; yet, if he be covetous, he must be perplex'd with many excruciating Thoughts, and his Body is generally a fit Emblem of the Leanness of his Soul.

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Care about what he at present enjoys, Fears of losing, Anxiety about increasing his Possessions, cunning Contrivances how to over-reach the Unwary, and hellish Schemes in order to grind the Face of the Poor, must make the covetous Man, amidst his Abundance, of all Men the most miserable. When a Man is thus oppress'd with the Weight of worldly Care, he has no Room for, or Relish of, what gives the greatest Pleasure to a rational Soul, the agreeable Consciousness of having pleas'd G O D. And what Pleasure can such a Man take in honouring G O D, who, in his Life, denies his very Being? Is not he conscious that he has set up the G O L D E N I D O L, and worshipped it in Opposition to the true, the living G O D? And if such a one does pray to, and praise G O D; yet how can he expect a Blessing, when he does not honour his Maker with his Substance? Will not his Prayers be rather turned into Sin, since his Hypocrisy demonstrates his Mockery of that Being who is a jealous and a terrible G O D? Unhappy then must be the Case of this miserable Man, if he cannot forget G O D in Thought as well as Practice: Recollection

lection must be terrible; and Apprehension of a future State, where all must be rewarded according to their Works, especially in Time of Sickneſs, or at the Hour of Death, muſt be an agonizing Pain, and a ſort of Foretaſte of Miſery which the Damned only feel. In ſuch a State GOD appears to him frowning, unmerciful, vindictive: This diſmal Notion naturally throws him into an Amazement, Horror, Deſpair; and he deſires, what is in ſuch a Situation, the ardent Deſire of the moſt Abandoned, that he might live yet a little longer, and that he might at laſt die the Death of the Righteous, and that his latter End might be like his. But GOD, the good, the gracious, the merciful, who long bore with the repeated Transgreſſions of the wicked Man, in expectation that he would repent and amend, and conſider at laſt what belonged to his Peace, now cuts him off in the Miſt of his Sins, and leaves him to the diſmal Apprehenſion of approaching Judgment. If Men would really conſider this melancholy State of the wicked Man, and that there is no Peace unto him, either in Time or in Eternity; if they would

would seriously consider the almost infinite Difference between a Life of Misery and a Life of real Pleasure, even in this State of Probation, they would no longer be tempted to Sin by their lawless Passions, or by the Agreeableness of any Object.

BUT unhappy for us it is, that we often resist the good Motions of G O D's ordinary Grace within us; are little attentive to the Voice of the Charmer, charm she never so wisely, and reject the common Means of Salvation which G O D has graciously vouchsafed us. And tho' all Things in the Creation are serious, and perform the several Offices agreeable to their respective Natures; yet Man, endued with Reason, and for whom G O D died, as if he had no Returns of Gratitude to make for the many Favours received, either trifles away Life unthinkingly, or is lost between sinning and repenting; or follows, what is the Destruction of all solid intellectual Pleasure in this Life, the low Gratifications of Sense for a Season. And certainly that Man, who prefers the Body to the Soul, the mortal to the immortal part, little deserves the
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Rank he obtains among rational Beings. For we then shew greatest Signs of Rationality, when we answer the End of our Creation; and we then answer the End of our Creation, when we perform a rational Worship towards our best Benefactor, GOD ALMIGHTY; and we are then best pleased with ourselves, and therefore best pleased with those about us, when we shew by our Words and Works that we are at Peace with GOD.

BESIDES, we then have the most intense Pleasure when our Souls are the least conversant with material Objects. The Body has been always reckoned a Clog to the Soul in her Operations; she cannot think with her native Freedom, but is cramped in her Speculations, often lost in the Mists of Error, whilst human Science is the Object of her Contemplation. Yet notwithstanding *that*, the Appearance of Truth, and the Solution of any Difficulty, delights the Soul with such a sensible Pleasure, that speculative Men think it an ample Reward for the Labour of the Brain: and such has been the Force of this rational Pleasure, that

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it has reclaimed the Libertine, and made him neglect the Beauty of the Body, for the never-fading Beauties of the Mind. If such be the Pleasure, as it certainly is, when we deal in human Science, what must be the Pleasure arising from the Knowledge of ourselves, and a Contemplation of that Being from whom we receive every good and perfect Gift. Who is there of so harden'd a Nature, as to receive no grateful Sensations from the Consideration of GOD's Love in the Redemption of fallen Man? And is not this Pleasure greatly augmented by the additional Consideration of our being adopted thereby into the Number of the SONS of GOD? This is a comfortable Assistance under every Circumstance of Life: When Storms arise, or when the Wicked triumph, or when Death, that King of Terrors, threatens to cut the Thread of Life, it is a present Help in Time of Trouble; and is to the good Man, what ORPHEUS's Lyre is said to be to the Miserable in the infernal Regions, a soothing Cordial in Calamity, and makes him almost forget, even in Torture and Misery, that he is miserable.

As the loving and honouring GOD is attended with such exquisite Pleasure, so likewise from the Performance of our Duty to our Neighbour, we receive Recompences of Pleasure suitable to our several Acts of Beneficence. “As ye would
 “that Men should do unto you, even do ye likewise unto them,” is the grand Gospel-precept upon which hang all the Law and the Prophets. If Men would observe strictly this Behaviour towards one another, there would be no longer Wars and Bickerings among us; but rather, because we expect Gentleness, Civility and Complaisance, and honourable Behaviour from other Men, we ought to put on the same amiable Conduct, in order to gain, what may be wish’d for rather than expected in the World, Peace and Unanimity of Sentiments. A virtuous Conduct, however, tho’ it does not always gain a suitable Return, yet affords a suitable Reward for the Performance of it. No Man does a virtuous Action without perceiving a secret Satisfaction in the doing of it: So that VIRTUE, in this Sense, is its own Reward in this Life, and has a direct Tendency to promote
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our present as well as future Happiness. But every Action that is attended with a mental Pleasure may not be virtuous. Men that are strongly affected at seeing miserable Objects, are even forced, by their natural Make and Constitution, to contribute to the Relief of such Misery; and when they are relieving others, they at the same Time relieve themselves of an Uneasiness, and consequently do themselves a Pleasure. But as they do not give Relief to the Distressed, because God has commanded it, their Communication of such Relief is no Virtue, and therefore of no Moment in the Sight of God: And I am afraid, that such giving of Alms, which is looked upon as a Covering for a Multitude of Sins, but too often will only meet with its Reward here; and yet we may pronounce it a great Happiness, that some rich Men are so softly constituted by Nature, that they will perform an Action, in order to free themselves from a present Uneasiness, when they would not have done it for the Sake of a Fellow-creature, or because God has commanded it. To have a feeling Sense, however, of another's Misery, is
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reckon'd a happy Temperament of Body, which is generally productive of Benevolence; and Benevolence is an Incentive to Beneficence; and Beneficence, if we do it not for the relieving our own Minds, or for the Sake of popular Applause, will lead us to Rivers of Pleasure in a future State. Besides then the natural Pleasure of doing a virtuous Action, the consequent Satisfaction of having pleased G O D, is an additional Spur to moral Goodness. But if we will not be religious, or, in other Words, perform our Duty to G O D, or our Neighbour, because of the Pleasure attending them, yet, one would imagine, we would be dutiful to ourselves.

As the Practice of Virtue is the Health of the Soul, so is it likewise the Health of the Body. Our Bodies are generally the most freed from Pain when we conform to the Gospel Rules. The M E E K shall inherit the Earth; because he is free from Passion and Violence, from Haughtiness and Turbulency. The T E M P E R A T E in all Things is able to fight the good Fight, and to finish his Course

Course with Joy ; because he keeps the Body in Subjection to the Mind : Whereas those who are led by their Passions, are tormented both in Body and Mind. The **ANGRY MAN** is often distracted, with Pains in the Head, Breast, Stomach : and no Wonder, since one Irregularity naturally produces another ; and since Anger is occasioned by an irregular Flow of Blood into the Head, it is no Wonder that Pain is consequent upon such a Motion, because a too great Distension of the Vessels is naturally productive of Pain. The **INTEMPERATE MAN** too, for the same Reason, tho' arising from different Causes, is most tormented with Pain. The Top of his Head to the Sole of his Foot reminds him of his Luxury, Gluttony, Drunkenness. The **ENVIOUS MAN**, by his emaciated Body, gives us a demonstrative Proof of the Uneasiness he labours under : His Body is a sufficient Emblem of the Weakness of his Mind ; and when there is such a Connection and Sympathy between the Soul and Body, the one cannot suffer without the other ; and the Body then is most

most distemper'd under a wounded Spirit: So true is the WISE MAN'S Observation, that ENVY is the *Rottenness of the Bones.*

IF then we would be just to ourselves we should practise the moral Virtues; if we will not do that for our Souls Health, let us at least for the Ease of the Body. For every Man that indulges his Passions in any criminal Pursuit, offends not only against GOD, Reason, or his own Soul, but likewise against his own Body. A Violation of CHASTITY is a Sin committed against the Body: and all other Vices, of whatever Complexion they be, or however they be coloured over by the specious Glosses of designing Men, are nevertheless destructive to the Body as well as the Soul,

A GENERAL when he delivers a CASTLE to be defended by any inferior Officer, charges him to stand firm to his Post, to repair the Breaches an Enemy has made, to strengthen the old Fortifications by new Works, to stock himself with Arms
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and Ammunition, Men and Money; and, after all, to use Diligence, Prudence, and Precaution, that he may not be attack'd by Surprise, or be betrayed by the Cowardice or Treachery of his Garrison. THIS is the very Case of MAN: GOD has assign'd him a Post to defend against his Adversary, the Devil; he is to arm himself with the Sword of the Spirit, the Breast-plate of Righteousness, and the Helmet of Salvation; and after he has done all, to stand, to be collected in himself, and to repair the Breaches Sin has made, and fortify himself with good Resolutions; that he may not be surprized to injure his Body or Soul by the Beauty or Attraction of surrounding Objects, by a deluding Imagination, or strong Affections from within. If he thus performs his Duty to GOD, to his Neighbour and himself, he will receive particular Satisfaction from the Practice of each of these Duties; and he will be inclined to think, that THAT RELIGION must be divine, which has so well blended our Duty with our Interest, and has made our present Happiness depend

pend upon our present Goodness; which was the SECOND Thing I proposed to treat of in this Discourse; but I must, with GOD's Leave, omit it for another Opportunity.

NOW to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour, Praise, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, both now and ever. AMEN.



S E R-



S E R M O N II.

I TIMOTHY IV. *and part of the 8th Verse.*

*But GODLINESS is profitable unto all Things,
having the Promise of the Life that now is, and
of that which is to come.*

W HATEVER tends to the Happiness and Perfection of Man's Being, should be the Object of every Man's Desires. For this Reason, whatever has a direct Tendency to make us lovely and amiable in our Lives; whatever, if steadily practised, will consequentially add Vigour to the Body, and be perfective of the better Part of us, our Souls; whatever is commendable and praise-worthy; if there be any Virtue or any Praise, we ought not only to think of, but desire, and not only de-

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fire, but pursue, with that heroick Constancy, which not only becomes a Man, but something more than mere Man, the good Christian.

ALL Laws, or Systems of Laws, which are, or have been enacted in the World, ought principally to regard the Good of the Community for which they were enacted. Now, if any be found deficient in this respect, and are either contrived to promote partial, selfish Ends; or contain something shocking to Reason, and disagreeable to Human Nature in them; we may with good Reason, when proposed to our Understandings, consider them as the Invention of frail Man. But if, on the contrary, we should have the good Fortune to meet with a System of Laws every Way calculated to make us wise, just, and good; and naturally contributing to the obtaining of That, which all Men pretend they are in Pursuit of, present Happiness; we might then, with the greatest Justice, conclude, that the Author of them must be an all-wise and good Being; who, best understanding the several Relations we stand in to one

another, knew how to draw us even by Violence, by the Cords of Love, and the Bond of Peace, to consult, what every Pretender to Reason ought to consult, his present as well as future Happiness.

FOR this Reason, the Gospel, considered merely as a System of Laws, ought to merit our Attention, and may reasonably claim a fair and candid Examination from every rational Enquirer; who, tho' he regards a future State as a Chimera, would only be happy in this World; which, when compared to a more glorious Mansion of the Just, may be emphatically stiled the very Shadow of Being.

AND if, upon a fair Examination, it shall appear that nothing is enjoined us in the sacred Oracles as a Duty, but what will, by the constant Exercise of it, make us happier, we shall then be inexcusable if we neglect so great, and at the same Time, so unmerited Salvation. For such it may be termed, if it has a natural Tendency to free us, from what is consequent upon unrestrained Appetites,

tites, a distempered Body ; or from that greatest of all Calamities, which can befall degenerate Man, a WOUNDED SPIRIT. That the Practice of religious Wisdom is attended with such a Freedom, the Experience of every good Man abundantly testifies ; so that if you will not believe an inspired Writer, believe what any of you may experience, That GODLINESS is profitable unto all Things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come. In a former Discourse upon which Words, I proposed to consider the following Propositions :

I. THAT Religion has a direct Tendency to promote our present Happiness in this Life.

AND II. That such a Religion, that has such a Tendency, carries an internal Evidence of its DIVINITY along with it.

AND therefore, III. It ought to be embraced, not only upon account of its Divinity, or future Rewards which it proposes, but because

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our Happiness, even in this Life, is consulted by it.

THE first of these Propositions I have already considered, by endeavouring to shew, that GODLINESS, that is, Religion, consists in our Duty to GOD, our Neighbour, and ourselves; and that a constant Perseverance in Well-doing in these several Branches of our Duty, was the only Happiness which can in this Life be properly called so, or ever be obtained. And as Religion produces such an happy Effect, we may justly conclude, that its ORIGIN is DIVINE; which was the *second* Thing I proposed to consider.

IT has been the constant Observation of the unprejudiced Part of Mankind, that ever gave themselves Liberty to think, that the Productions of Men always were attended with some Failures, which sufficiently discovered the Imperfections of their several Authors. Systems of Laws, that were contrived for the Promotion of the Happiness of the particular Communities for which they

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were made, not only discovered the Corruption into which Men in general were fallen, but likewise the Degeneracy of their Compilers. It would indeed be unnatural for us to expect that perfect Purity should flow from a corrupted Heart : for Interest, or Inclination, or both those two great Enemies to Truth, too often hoodwink what should always, supposing the Want of Revelation, determine the Will, the rational Faculty. And that this should be the Case with frail Humanity, that sees but thro' a Glass darkly, and that too with the additional Disadvantages of having a dense Medium to see thro', the Passions and Prejudices, which divert the Rays of Truth from entering, in a proper Disposition to inform the Understanding, it is no Wonder ; since STREAMS that flow thro' MINERALS always contract the Qualities of the Bodies thro' which they run : And DOCTRINES, like STREAMS, can never flow pure, when either the Fountains or the Channels, thro' which they are conveyed, are impure. It is observed indeed, that, like WATER, (which, as it runs, refines) Men's Notions about moral
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RELIGION RECOMMENDED. 31

Good and Evil continually improved as they flowed down the Stream of Time from Father to Son; but notwithstanding that, some Imperfection, some bad Principle, after all their Researches, discovered itself to disgrace human Nature; and even their best Notions had little Weight in them, because they wanted those Sanctions, which every Rule of Action should be attended with, REWARDS and PUNISHMENTS.

THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME, or the Rule of Life delivered to us in the Gospel, whose End and Aim is the Perfection of our Natures, is in itself entirely perfect. It is to us, what the Tree of Knowledge was to our first Parents, the Knowledge of Good and Evil; but with this material memorable Difference: to them it was the Knowledge of Variety of Pain, Misery, Death; but to us it is not only the Tree of Knowledge, but of Life; whose Root, tho' fix'd in Earth, yet loses its Top in Heaven; by the kindly Assistance of whose Branches, we may, tho' with Difficulty, ascend to that happy Kingdom; where reigns universal

versal Righteousness, and therefore universal Harmony, the HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

WHATEVER then has a direct Tendency to make us perfect, just, and good, must immediately, if heartily practised, make us happier; and the Contrivance of such Means must be attributed to a good benevolent Being, who best understanding our Natures, knew best how to prescribe what was the most productive of Happiness. For this Reason, we may justly imagine, that God gave us the Gospel Dispensation; which, both for the Excellency of its Precepts, and Universality of their Extent, can claim no other Original.

No Religion in the World that was plann'd by mere Man, ever prescrib'd universal Benevolence to Man. LOVE and CHARITY was only to extend to Guests, Friends, Citizens. To this confin'd, contracted Sphere, was Heathen Benevolence extended, till the Day-spring from on high, the SUN of RIGHTEOUSNESS, shone in their Hearts, and melted them into Tenderness,

ness, Compassion, Benevolence. Hence their Hearts were enlarged, and in their Understandings there sprang up a LIGHT, which soon dispell'd the Mists of Ignorance, and directed their wandering Steps thro' the Mazes of Error, to something more desirable than all the Volumes of Vanity and empty Deceit in the World, THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL-COVENANT.

THE Benevolence which it proposes is universal. As CHRIST loved us, so are we to love one another. As the Benefits of CHRIST'S Passion diffused itself thro' the whole rational Part of the Creation, so is our Benevolence to be circumscribed by no particular Time, Place, or Person; but, like its GREAT AUTHOR, its Circumference is to be no where, and its Centre every where.

SUCH a Benevolence as this, which is entirely suited to Man's Nature, and is necessarily productive of his Happiness, as it is attended with Complaisance, Humility, Sincerity, Charity, Hospitality, and a Delight in pleasing, and every other

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laudable

laudable Perfection, must take its Rise from DIVINITY. For if we take a View only of the several Sects which deviate from the Gospel-Purity, we shall find them so far from cultivating an universal Benevolence, that they are ready to pronounce Damnation on those that differ from them only in Sentiment, in Forms, Ceremonies, or any other Matters merely indifferent. But such severe Judges ought to consider, that when they mingle their own contracted Notions with the Gospel-Precepts, they not only dishonour GOD by such an unnatural Composition; but also, by a sour Moroseness of Temper, destroy that chearful benevolent Disposition, which is one grand Characteristick of every good Christian.

No greater internal Evidence for the Divinity of the SACRED WRITINGS can be produced than BENEVOLENCE, which almost in every Page is taught; and not only taught, but enforced by EXAMPLE. It strikes at the Root of all these Passions; which, for the Destruction they bring upon the Peace of all Society, are emphatically

cally filed the DISEASES of the MIND. Where it has rivetted itself into the Heart of Man, there is no ENVY because a Neighbour is more prosperous; no HATRED for real or supposed Injuries; no REVENGE, because 'tis referred to the Execution of that Being to whom alone Vengeance belongs. It excludes ANGER, and all the Degrees of it, except it has for its Object that most deform'd, and the most pernicious of all Objects, SIN. And it excludes, in short, all Sorrow, all godly Sorrow excepted; which extends itself, not only to a Man's own Failures in Duty, but likewise to the Infirmities, Vices, and unmerited Misfortunes of others: But all repining and murmuring at the wise Dispensation of Providence, and all sorrowing for Injuries and Disappointments received from Men, are utterly unwarranted by this GOSPEL-BENEVOLENCE: for we are not only to wish, but to forward the Salvation of all Men, even of our most inveterate Enemies; that they seeing our good Works, may at last be restored to the Paths of Peace, and be excited to a glorious Emulation, to glorify together with us

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our Father which is in Heaven. And if we love GOD, and believe him endued with every possible Perfection, we can never repine at his Proceedings; but whether he gives us Health or Sickness, Prosperity or Adversity, we must conclude it wisest, justest, best.

AND as Benevolence keeps the Mind free from all hurtful Passions, so does it likewise restrain the Possessor of it from every Thing bad in Practice. No Man can be unjust, and, at the same Time, benevolent. For LOVE worketh no Ill to his Neighbour; and therefore nothing bad in Practice can be consequent upon it. No Man that sincerely wishes his Neighbour's Welfare will defraud him, or spoil him of his Goods, will injure his Person, or endeavour to take away that, which is more precious than Life to every good Man, REPUTATION. No Man, in short, that has this benevolent Principle, will deal in Deceit, Censoriousness, Contention; but rather, because he considers himself as a Member of this great Society, the World, and also as design'd for a
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more durable Mansion in Heaven, he will practise every social Virtue, by the Assistance of which he may more effectually ascend thither ; where true Joys are only to be found.

THIS Principle, however good as it is in its Tendency, is but little practised in the World ; and it would be less so, if GOD was not proved the Author of it : Most Men are naturally selfish, angry, revengeful : Few Men, even under the Gospel, have a general Respect ; but fewer have universal Benevolence for their Fellow-creatures. Men should respect one another, because they are Partakers of the same common Natures ; should love another, because GOD is the Creator and Preserver of every Individual ; and we should forward each other's Salvation, because the Lamb of GOD condescended to empty himself of his Glory, and gave us a Life inimitable, both for its Benevolence, and also for the Beneficence exhibited by it.

NOT so unthinking Man : He, as if wiser than
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the GOD that made him, will not love his Friends, much less his Enemies: He returns Hatred too often for Good-will, and Ingratitude for Works of the greatest Kindness. He can expose to Ridicule the Infirmities of Friends; and, in order to shew his Malevolence, can, for the Diversion of his Acquaintance, murder their Reputation: He can scatter his Arrows, Firebrands, and Death; and yet he can have the Modesty to say, Am not I in sport? To such a one may be applicable that Observation in the Fable, “What is Sport to thee, is Death to me.” Nay, to suffer thus in Reputation is worse than Death: A natural Death is generally finished in the Twinkling of an Eye; but a moral one, the Death of Reputation, continues not only too often with Life, but likewise extends itself beyond the Grave. The horrid SPECTRE is too maliciously conjur’d up not to excite PALENESS, the Attendant upon Fear, but BLUSHES in the innocent Faces of Posterity. BETTER it is to be silent, than to be witty at the Expence of INNOCENCE; better

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it is to be deemed a Man of narrow Thought, than to shew by our much speaking, that we think neither humbly of ourselves, nor candidly of our Neighbours: And there is no greater Argument of a Fool, than a Multitude of bad Words inconsistent with common Honesty.

THE Nature of Man being thus prone to Deeds of Darkness, Ill-nature, and Defamation, What could be invented as a more proper Remedy for it than the GOSPEL BENEVOLENCE? And can it be imagined, that the Heart of Man would contrive such a Cure? Is it in the least probable, that Man, who is by Nature SELFISH and REVENGEFUL, would himself make Laws which neither he nor the rest of Mankind would follow? Or, would he enforce these Laws with proper Sanctions, when they contradicted the natural Bent of his Temper? And supposing that he saw the Expediency of such Laws, Could he, for that Reason, imagine, that Men would follow them merely because he prescrib'd them? But would not a too great Fondness for SELF, Covetousness, Pride,

Pride, Envy, and false Honour, prevent the en-acting of such salutary Laws as we find inculcated in the Gospel? Would Meekness, Forgiveness of Injuries, and Humility, be prescribed as practicable, convenient, or commendable? Would Charity, that great LAW OF KINDNESS, which comprehends almost all Virtues, be so much as thought of, much less practised, supposing that it had not descended with its great Author from Heaven? And since Men do not practise these Virtues commanded by GOD himself, Would they have thought them suited to Man's Nature, if Man had prescribed them? The Truth is, Man is prone to Sin, and averse to Goodness; his Passions are strong, and apparent Good is generally their Object. Hence arises the Neglect of Precepts every Way adapted to promote private as well as publick Happiness. Hence Men act contrary to Conviction, and receive Doctrines for good, which they may intend indeed to pay a Regard to, but never do practise. But when Men are grown old in Sin, they would willingly carve out for themselves Principles every Way suit-

suitable to their Practice. Hence Christianity is rejected, and the Dictates of corrupted Reason, I should say Passion, are substituted in its Place. Hence is Corruption patronised by the pretended Light of Nature; and universal Benevolence is lost in a low, sneaking, particular Selfishness. If Men were left to themselves, and there was no established Form of Worship, we would soon see what Destruction would be brought upon the Gospel. Every one would adopt or reject Precepts, as they saw them agree, or disagree, with their several Interests: Every one would have their favourite Path to tread in, till, at last, they would leave no Remains of the Gospel-Purity: A no small Argument this, that Man never contrived the G O S P E L - S C H E M E; for it is impossible that we should ever gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles, or that a corrupt Tree should ever bring forth good Fruit.

As the Excellency then of the Gospel-Precepts sufficiently prove the Divinity of their Author, so likewise does the Universality of their Extent.

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They are calculated, not as the *Jewish* Dispensation, for a peculiar People, but for the Benefit and Happiness of every Nation under Heaven. All Laws that ever appeared before the Gospel-Covenant, only extended to particular Communities, only obliged those for whom they were made, and some of them ought not to have been obligatory, because they were disagreeable to Reason, and consequently were detrimental to Society: Whereas the Gospel-Laws, because the Happiness of ALL Men is their constant Object, are, for that Reason, supposing their Divinity could not be proved, obligatory. For when Laws are, as all Laws should be, founded on Reason, no Man can reject them as unreasonable; and therefore, those who disregard them, must do Violence to their Reason, and consequently are inexcusable both in the Sight of GOD and Man. That the Gospel contains a reasonable Service, every one that has practised the Rules comprehended therein can best tell. And if it appears that the Observance of them shall make one Man as happy as this State is capable of, Why may not all Men be happy,

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for the same Reason? And that all Men may be happy, by the constant and uniform Practice of the Gospel-Rules, every Man's unbiaſſed Reason, as well as Experience, will inform him. And if it could be demonſtrated, which indeed is impoſſible, that theſe Rules were not productive of univerſal Good, then there might be ſome Excuse pleaded for the not receiving of them. But as infinite Love for the Human Race was the great Motive for the Promulgation of theſe Rules, and as the Divine Love was the very Baſis and Foundation of them, ſo is LOVE ſaid to be the fulfilling of the LAW; for no Man can be a Breaker of it that truly loves his GOD, his NEIGHBOUR, and HIMSELF: Happy would the People be, who are in ſuch a Caſe; yea, happy the People who follow the Rules preſcribed by their GOD.

BUT it may be aſked, if our LOVE and BENEVOLENCE muſt be univerſal; muſt we, for that Reason, offend no Man? Are we not commanded to rebuke them that ſin before all, and yet

yet are we not commanded to follow Peace with all Men? To this it may be answered, that if, by disobliging and offending some Persons, we can do them the greater Good; if we can reform and save them; or, however, can promote the publick Happiness, by disturbing their Repose more than by leaving them in Tranquility, then it is that Considerations of Peace so far cease, as they are inconsistent with Piety and Charity. For it is for the Good of Mankind that Vices, of what Complexion soever, should be discouraged. As they have an immediate Tendency to bring on the Ruin of Societies, Kingdoms, and even the Destruction of the whole Earth; hence it is the Duty of every Christian to endeavour at least to oppose the Overflowing of Ungodliness, that the Guilty might be reformed, and the Innocent not be hurried away in the mighty Torrent. If by rebuking the Sinner we can reclaim him from the Error of his Ways, we give the greatest Instance of Charity; and by saving a Soul alive we cover a Multitude of Sins. If the SWEARER, BLASPHEMER, DRUNKARD, LIBERTINE, and
all

all the black Catalogue of Sinners enumerated by St PAUL, could be terrified into Goodness by harsh Expressions; or, where those gentler Methods fail, by severer Treatment; would we not, in so doing, perform a Deed of Charity, and contribute thereby to the Glory of GOD? To behave thus, indeed, in these our Days, when Gravity is thought Moroseness, and Sanctity of Manners, Hypocrisy; when the infamous Mirth of the Son of Fortune is every where preferr'd to the Man of Sense; when, to preserve one's Integrity, one must avoid the Conversation of most Men; when Modesty, that great Guard of Virtue, is laugh'd out of Countenance; when the smooth Tongue, lying Face, and corrupted Heart, are more valued than Simplicity, Sincerity, and a regular Tenor of good Actions; when the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life, make Men either Infidels, or something worse than Infidels, careless Christians: In such Times, to rebuke such Vices as these, requires a great deal of Goodness, an unwavering Resolution,

tion, clear Courage, and a Zeal according to Knowledge.

BUT all these beforementioned Roots of Bitterness, that branch out with great Luxuriance from the Heart of Man, might easily be check'd in their Growth, if Men would only try their Conduct by the GOSPEL-RULES. The Passions that swell too high, and rage with direful Impetuosity, would soon ebb, and sink into a profound Calm, and be confin'd within their proper Channel. REASON then would assume the gentler Sway, and be regulated by REVELATION; would conduct our shatter'd Barks thro' the unavoidable Storms of Life, thro' Rocks and Quicksands; which, because latent, are the more dangerous, till they arrive safe in the ETERNAL HAVEN where they would be.

IF we would be meek, patient, tender-hearted, shewing Bowels of Mercies to all Men, what a pleasant, serene, peaceable State would the World enjoy? It would then be apt to tempt Men to
desire

desire, what is the earnest Desire of all Men, notwithstanding the several natural and moral Evils incident to human Nature, LENGTH OF DAYS and LONG LIFE. Men would not only be of one Mind in an House, but likewise universal Love would be the ruling Passion in the rational Part of the Creation: Hence Health and Peace of Mind, those natural Attendants upon Goodness, would carry all Men with a composed even Chearfulness of Mind to the Mansions of immortal Youth, where they will shine as STARS in the FIRMAMENT. Such is the excellent Tendency of the GOSPEL-PRECEPTS, and such the Universality of their Extent! Both of which sufficiently evince the DIVINITY of their AUTHOR; who, by such Means, has largely contributed both to our present and future Happiness.

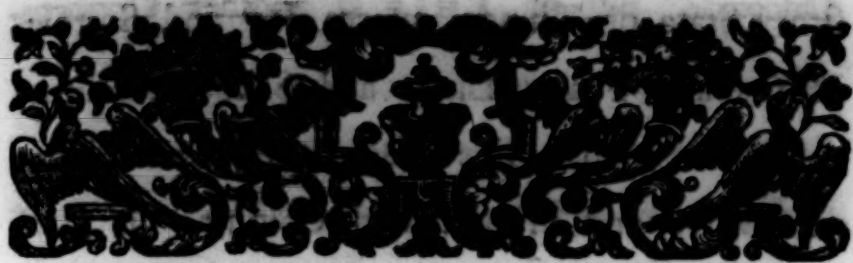
BUT, if we will not receive the Gospel because of its DIVINITY or future Rewards, let us at least, for the Sake of making this gloomy State of Things tolerable to us, embrace it; which was the *Third* Thing I proposed to consider in this
Dis-

Discourse: But of THIS at another Opportunity.

NOW to GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour, Glory, Majesty, and Dominion, both now and ever. AMEN.



S E R-



S E R M O N I I I .

I TIMOTHY IV. *and part of the 8th Verse.*

*But GODLINESS is profitable unto all Things,
having the Promise of the Life that now is, and
of that which is to come.*

'TIS a constant Observation of all Writers, that Mankind is mostly affected with Things present ; that their Desires are generally confin'd within the narrow Limits of this World ; and that surrounding Objects almost always exclude, what should be the constant Subject of a rational Being, the glorious Thoughts of Immortality. The Reason why they thus act seems to be this : Real Happiness, which indeed is not attainable in this Life, seems to be the Expectation of most Men, even in this tran-

sitory State of Things, where Joy and Sorrow, Hopes and Fears, Light and Shade, constitute the Life of Man. The Imagination paints Things delusively, and in borrow'd Colours; it gives Solidity to Emptiness, Beauty to Deformity, and Worth to Meanness, and has the Power of EGYPTIAN SUPERSTITION, it can transform an APE into a GOD; but what is the more surprizing, it pretends to realize NOTHING. No Wonder then, that Man, under such an erroneous flattering Guide, mistakes Misery for Happiness, and agonizing Pain for solid permanent Pleasure; no Wonder that Sensuality is prefer'd to Temperance, and Confusion to the Love of Order; or that Mankind, rather than oppose the mighty Torrent of Affection, chuses to swim smoothly down the Current of Inclination. To contradict Passion, a Libertine thinks an arduous, unnatural, nay, an impossible Task. To follow Nature, which is nothing else but a criminal Indulgence of every Sense, is with him answering the End of his Creation; not considering that the Beauty of Life, like the BEAUTY of a good

PICTURE, consists in a regular Harmony and Concert of all its Parts, and in a Conformity to the Rules of Reason. If every one was to follow the Propensities of his depraved Appetite, (for one Man has as much Right as another) we would not only, in all human Probability, see the Death of Morality, but the Destruction of the Sons of ADAM. Such has been, if the History of all Ages may be credited, the dismal Consequence of a total Depravation of Manners; so true is it, that RIGHTEOUSNESS exalteth a NATION, but SIN is the DESTRUCTION of any People. When Men throw aside the natural Distinction between Good and Evil, all Restraints from Ill are consequently broke; Vices then, of all Complexions, must deluge the Earth like a mighty INUNDATION, and drown the very Seeds of Virtue. The Notion of a GOD likewise is then either lost or confus'd; his Providence, that by secret Springs directs the harmonious Motion of the Universe, is too often depreciated; except LIGHTENING, that terrible Instrument of Vengeance, flashes Conviction to their Understandings,

or

or THUNDER, that dreadful Attendant upon the DEITY, awakens their sleepy Consciences, and forces them to own with Confusion of Face the Presence of OMNIPOTENCE.

BUT the good, the religious Man, amidst Lightenings, Thunder, Whirlwinds, and Earthquakes, sits humble, resign'd, compos'd; he knows no Fear, but the FEAR of the ALMIGHTY; who amidst every Terror, is his strong Tower, and Rock of Defence, a present Help in Time of Need. Is there any that would secure to himself a FRIEND? Let him be but good or religious, and he will have an ALMIGHTY FRIEND. Is any oppress'd with the Weight of SIN, and disturb'd with the Gnawings of a troubled CONSCIENCE? There is an ADVOCATE with the FATHER, who graciously invites all that labour, and are heavy laden, to come unto him, and he will give them REST. Is any sick, or in ADVERSITY? Let him apply to that almighty and all-merciful PHYSICIAN, who raises the DEAD to LIFE, and the POOR out of

of

of the DUST. Would any one enjoy LIFE, and see good DAYS, or inherit a BLESSING? Let him refrain his Tongue from Evil, and his Lips that they speak no Guile; let him eschew Evil, and do Good; let him seek Peace, and ensue it: For the Eyes of the LORD are over the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Prayers: But the Face of the LORD is against them that do Evil. And who is it that will harm you, if ye be Followers of that which is Good? GOODNESS then is the necessary Armour for every Man that would fight the good Fight, and procure to himself the Blessings of Peace in this World, and a Crown of Glory in the next. For GOD will with-hold no Manner of Good from those that sincerely love HIM. Thus GODLINESS has not only the PROMISE of the Life that *now is*, but also of that likewise *which is to come*. --- In two former Discourses upon which Words, I consider'd these two Propositions:

First, THAT RELIGION is the surest Road to Happiness in this Life: And that, *Secondly*,

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because it tends to make us happy, it proves its **DIVINITY**. The first of these I endeavour'd to prove from the Happiness that must necessarily result from the strict Observance of those relative Duties, of which Religion consists, to **GOD**, our Neighbour, and ourselves.

THE Truth of the second Proposition, I endeavour'd to prove from the Excellency of the **GOSPEL-PRECEPTS**, which Man, as he is a Compound of great Ignorance, much Folly, and little Goodness, would never have invented; and also from the **UNIVERSALITY** of their **EXTENT**, as they are excellently well calculated to promote universal Harmony, and therefore universal Happiness, among all the **KINDREDS** of the **EARTH**.

I **COME** now, as I propos'd in the *last* Place, to consider our particular **OBLIGATIONS** to **RELIGION**, because of its promoting our *present* Interest.

I AM not ignorant that it may be objected here, that temporal Motives to Obedience ought not to be so much insisted on; and that I ought rather to have painted the Joys of Heaven, or the Terrors of Hell, in order to invite or deter the Sinner from the Error of his Way.

To this I answer, that Objects generally affect Men according to their Distance. The Prospect of present Gain in the Commerce between Man and Man, is usually attended with greater Pleasure, and consequently pursued with greater Vigour, than the View of larger Advantages placed at a more remote Point of Light. The same holds with respect to Things temporal and eternal. The Things eternal not being present, and consequently not expos'd to our View, do not affect us so much as sensible Objects. If then Men can be persuaded from the Enjoyment of the Pleasures of Sin for the Season they continue Pilgrims here, either because they are shameful, prejudicial to their Affairs, or destructive to the Body; ought not such Arguments, taken from Conveniency, be made Use of in

in order to invite Men from Sin? It must be own'd, indeed, that if Men are virtuous upon no higher Motives, than because Virtue is convenient, and productive of Health and present Happiness; and if Men are seemingly religious, merely because Religion is the fashionable Convenience, in order to colour over sinister Designs, such Mens Virtue and Religion, with regard to another World, must be vain: because we ought to be virtuous and religious not only upon account of a present Convenience and Advantage, but likewise in obedience to GOD's just Commands.

HOWEVER, from whatever Motive Men practise Virtue, whether out of Ostentation, and to gain popular Applause, as some; or because it promotes the Health of the Body, and the grateful Peace and Indolency of Mind, as others; or, lastly, which should always be the Case, because GOD has propos'd Piety and Virtue as the Terms of Acceptance with him: From whatever of these Motives Men are virtuous, just and good, both they themselves and the World must receive no
small

small Advantage from it: So true is it that VIRTUE, even in this Scene of Things, which is diversified with Good and Ill, is its own REWARD, and that GODLINESS is great GAIN.

To insist upon the Practice of Virtue therefore, upon account of temporal Inducements, is not one of the least Motives to behave well. Our SAVIOUR himself, in the Sermon upon the Mount, in order to induce his Hearers to practise MEERNESS, MERCY, and the like, tells them, that not only a Reward in Reversion, but the INHERITANCE of the EARTH, will be consequent upon the Practice of these Virtues.

EXPERIENCE too tells us, that many of little or no Religion practise some Virtues, if such a Practice, exclusive of the Will of GOD, may be term'd virtuous; because such Virtues augment the Health of the Body, and increase thereby a thoughtless Indolence of Mind. Such will not live jovially and luxuriously, because Sicknefs is generally the Concomitant of Sensuality. The

Desire of continuing here, which to a good Man is not very desirable, occasions a consequent Desire of using such Means as seem best calculated for the promoting LENGTH of DAYS and LONG LIFE. And as Virtue has this happy Tendency, 'tis no Wonder if it be look'd upon as the one Thing needful to promote temporal Felicity, by those, who have shewn by their Lives, and more particularly by their Writings, that they are Advocates for no Religion. A great Argument this, however, that Morality must be very serviceable to Societies ; but the Practice of it must be very precarious and uncertain, when the WILL, and consequently the FEAR of GOD, are excluded from supporting of it. When the main Pillars, the Support of a Building, are taken away, Would it be strange, if the Superstructure should fall to the Ground ? And, in like Manner, if the Will and Fear of GOD were not thought the Foundation of all moral Obligation, What an Inlet to all Manner of Licentiousness would there be ? Every one then would be at Liberty to carve out for themselves a System of Morals, such

as Inclination, not Reason, would dictate; the Contrivance and Execution of which would put all HELL in TRIUMPH, and the blessed benevolent HOST of HEAVEN into MOURNING.

HAPPY, however, exceeding happy 'tis for the World that the Will of GOD is generally acknowledged as the Foundation, and the Fear of HIM, the kindly Remembrancer of all moral Obligation. Few are so very hardy, except the rich and powerful, as to deny, that GOD is the Author of all the Relations that subsist, and consequently of the Duties arising from these Relations: And therefore all our Obligations to the Performance of these Duties terminate at last in the Will of the Creator; who, by creating us, created all these Relations, from whence both our moral and religious Obligations are immediately deriv'd.

OUR Obligations then to GODLINESS, which comprehends every Duty, arise

I. FROM the Consideration of his having
created us. AND

AND II. From his providential Care over us,
and continual Preservation of us in Being.

AND III. From his having condescended to
reveal his Will by his only begotten SON,
who by his Death and Passion adopted us
into the Number of the SONS of GOD.

AND *lastly*, Because this Revelation contains
nothing but what is both agreeable to REA-
SON, and perfective of our NATURES.

THESE are the principal Obligations which
we lie under to be PIOUS, JUST, and GOOD:
Obligations sufficient, one would imagine, to in-
duce every rational Agent to love, and conse-
quently honour his Maker, not only with his Lips,
but in his Life; not with Eye-Service, as Men-
Pleasers, but as Men professing themselves Crea-
tures of his Hands, and that consider the End of
their Creation, the Means offer'd them in order
that they might obtain Salvation, and the Voca-
tion wherewith they are called. These Induce-
ments

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ments to GODLINESS are, or at least ought to be, so well known, that I shall not make any further Observation upon them. And as I have principally insisted upon temporal Obligations to Virtue in these Discourses, I shall consider further, that we are obliged to practise Religion, *first*, because 'tis easier for us to be good and virtuous, than wicked and vicious; and, *secondly*, because a religious Practice gains us Reputation; and *lastly*, because a Blessing will not only attend us if we hold fast our Integrity, but likewise descend upon our Posterity.

THE *first* of these Propositions is founded upon this Supposition, that we are obliged to contribute to our present Satisfaction in this Life; which none will deny except Enthusiasts, who make Religion, which is the greatest Disposer to Chearfulness, consist in Moroseness, Gloominess, Melancholy. If this Position be granted, as it certainly ought, that we should endeavour to obtain present Ease and Happiness; it will hence follow, that Virtue ought to be embraced, and Vice avoided. For
what-

whatever Method gives us more Trouble in the Performance, gives us less Satisfaction, and consequently more Trouble and Uneasiness. That the Practice of Vice produces this Effect, is evident from Experience. When a Man is vicious, and at the same Time is desirous of saving Appearances, in order to keep up his Credit in the World, every one may imagine that he must be put to great Perplexities. The very Consciousness of Guilt makes the guilty Person think, that the earnest penetrating Look of another whom he meets, supposes a Knowledge of his Crime; and if he finds that it is known, it gives him additional Vexation, and he endeavours to lessen the Heinousness of his own Misdemeanours, by blackening the Reputation of those who have thus justly reflected upon his Conduct. Thus one Vice is connected with another; and painful Reflections, the natural Result of, and the necessary Concomitant upon Vice, are, like Job's Comforters, miserable and unmerciful Tormenters of a wounded Conscience; which is but a sorry Recompence for the Loss of Virtue.

SUPPOSE too a Man is profuse and lavish in his Expences, and at the same Time covetous, (for Contradictions often meet in the same Person) Will not these very Extravagancies make him uneasy? And will not the Desire of supplying them be an Augmentation of his Unhappiness? Will he not, if he is not abandon'd, be afraid of a censorious World? And if he is reduced at last to live upon the Generosity of Friends, whose Pity and Relief would be cruel, because attended with bitter Reflections upon his past Conduct, Would he not, which is too often the Case, chuse Strangling rather than Life!

AND supposing that his Covetousness does keep him from losing his ALL; yet Art in raising of Money; low Cunning used, in order to circumvent the Unwary; Lies forged in order to gain Credit; and Promises to return what he is neither able nor willing to return; Fear of Creditors on one Hand, and of Poverty on the other; and in short, which he thinks the worst of his Case, the Fear of losing all Pleasure, and pleasurable Moments,

ments, which he usually dedicated to Sensuality, are Things that must necessarily create Flatness of Spirits, distracted Thoughts, and Wearisomness of Life, before he has learn'd, what every one in this State of Probation ought to learn, to LIVE.

MAN was never design'd for such Misery. GOD, in all his Dispensations, design'd him Happiness: and if Man will counteract the all-merciful Designs of the most benevolent Being, is GOD or Man to blame? Man surely was not placed here merely to stalk about, look about him, breathe the fresh Air, and to perform other Offices in common with other Animals, or to propagate Misery, Disorder, and Confusion in the World. He was placed here for wiser and nobler Ends. The proper Business of Man is WAR. His Enemies are his own FLESH and the DEVIL. When an HOUSE is divided against itself, except great Prudence be used, it must FALL; and as the grand Adversary the Devil acts unseen, and for that Reason is the more formidable, ought not greater Circumspection, Foresight, and Activity to be used,

in

in order to prevent both temporal and eternal Misery?

THE Prevention of both these the good Man has particularly in view. As he considers himself in a State of Warfare, he levies proper Forces to annoy his Enemies, arms himself with all the Christian Graces and moral Virtues, with which he is not only enabled to make a brave Defence against, but to conquer his Enemy.

THIS is no Difficulty to a Man of Courage, who is resolv'd, let others do what they will, that HE and HIS HOUSE will serve the LORD. He knows that the Ways of Vice are perplex'd and intricate, and terminate in Sorrow; and that tho' GODLINESS seems terrible to the Double-minded and Irresolute, yet a determin'd Constancy in the Practice of it, not only makes it easy, but desirable, convenient, pleasant.

WE find that Sloth and Idleness are the great Bars both to temporal and spiritual RICHES.

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They

They make every little seeming Difficulty a Bugbear, a LION in the Way, tho' the Path will naturally bring a Man to present and future Eminence in Glory. "SEEST thou a Man diligent
 " in his Business? Such an one shall stand before
 " KINGS, he shall not stand before mean Men.
 " Seest thou a Man pious, just and good? Such
 " an one shall not only live with ANGELS,
 but with the LIVING ALMIGHTY GOD." All which may be obtain'd at the easy Expence of bringing every inordinate Affection in Subjection to the GOSPEL of CHRIST.

EASY and reasonable Terms as these are, they are reckon'd hard and unreasonable by the indolent, careless, and sensual Part of Mankind. But supposing them difficult, which there is no occasion to suppose, a Man of true Courage and Elevation of Soul would attempt the Practice of them for that very Reason; and the Pleasure that attends the conquering of a Difficulty would be a Motive sufficient for the Attempt.

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HAPPY however it is, that no great Difficulties are to be met with in a Life of GODLINESS: All that are to be met with are of Men's own raising; they sin, and when they find it troublesome to persist in it, they find it painful too to measure back the Steps which they have already run in SIN. Here is the great Pain; which is easily prevented by keeping the Appetites under a continued good Regulation, lest they should conceive and bring forth SIN, and therefore Sorrow, Anxiety, Remorse.

AS GODLINESS contributes to our present Satisfaction, by delivering us from, what is consequent upon the Practice of Vice, natural Evil; so likewise it establishes a Man's Reputation, and makes him esteem'd in Life.

As Dishonesty brings a Man to Contempt, so Integrity, and a firm Adherence to Truth, is the most compendious Wisdom; it creates Confidence in those we have to deal with, saves the Labour of

of many Enquiries, and brings Things to an Issue in a few Words. Whereas Dishonesty is troublesome, sets a Man's Invention upon the Rack, and one Trick needs a great many more to make it good. 'Tis like building upon a false Foundation; which continually stands in need of Props to shoar it up, and proves at last more chargeable, than to have raised a substantial Building at first upon a true and solid Foundation: But Integrity is firm and substantial, and there is nothing hollow and unsound in it; and, because it is plain and open, it fears no Discovery: it gains Strength by Use, and the more and longer any Man practises it, the greater Service it does his Reputation, by encouraging those with whom he has to do, to repose the greatest Trust and Confidence in him; which, in Affairs of Life, is an unspeakable Advantage.

WERE Men of dishonest Minds only acquainted with the Advantages resulting from an upright Conduct, they would be honest, not out of any Love for Truth, but out of mere Knavery, that they might more effectually advance their several

veral Interests. But divine Providence hath justly hid this truest Point of Wisdom from their Eyes, that bad Men might not be upon a Level with the Upright, and serve their wicked Designs by honest and lawful Means.

INDEED, if Men were only to continue here for a Day, and had no Prospect of a future State, there might be less Reason for the securing of a good Reputation. But as Things are now constituted, it behoves us particularly to have our CONVERSATION honest in the Sight of all Men: Our Esteem amongst Men depends upon it; our Reputation is founded upon it; and, without it, neither a Blessing will descend upon us, or our POSTERITY: Which was the last Thing I proposed to consider.

GOD, as if Self-Love was not sufficient to make us observant of his Laws; and as if we were as careful of our Posterity as ourselves, has, upon Condition of Obedience to his just Commands, pronounced, not only upon us, but our
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RELIGION RECOMMENDED. 69

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Po-

POSTERITY, a Blessing. If then we have no Value for ourselves, let us, at least, value our Descendants. If we are temperate in all Things; and Followers of that which is good, we do our best towards producing not only an healthy, but a numerous and pious Offspring.

AND if we look upon GOD's Promises and Threats in no other Light than mere political Inventions; yet we should, even in this Case, pay some Deference to human Authority, by a suitable Deportment, for the Contrivance of making the Community, and all the Members of it, HAPPY. For the Health of the several Members, is the Health and Support of the Body-Politick; whereas infirm, sickly Members, are the Destruction, the Death of the Constitution. It is the Duty of every one therefore to behave well, not only for his own Sake, but for the Sake of his Family, his Children, his Country.

BUT as the WORD of GOD is no human Invention, but the Contrivance of DIVINITY itself

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self to make us **HAPPY**, why halt we between two Opinions? Why are we divided between God and the **WORLD**? Is his **ARM** shorten'd, or has he said that he will bless us and our Posterity, and will he not do it? "Consider the **LILIES** of the **FIELD** how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even **SOLOMON** in all his **GLORY** was not array'd like one of these: Wherefore, if **GOD** so clothe the Grass of the Field, which To-day is, and To-morrow is cast into the Oven; shall he not much more clothe you, if ye seek the Kingdom of **HEAVEN**, and his **RIGHT-EOUSNESS**, O ye of little Faith?"

IF there be any amongst you that disbelieve these gracious Words of the **LORD** of **LIFE**, because you are either in distress'd Circumstances, or afflicted with Sickness, consider, before you accuse the just, the good, the merciful **GOD** of Injustice, whether your Thoughts, Words, and Actions, have been conformable to his Laws: If, upon the Research, you find that they have not, let

let me intreat you to lead a NEW Life, to trust and delight in the LORD, and he will not only FEED you, but grant you your Heart's Desire, and make your RIGHTEOUSNESS as clear as the LIGHT, and your just DEALING as the NOON-DAY.

AND supposing you have endeavour'd to preserve your Integrity in every Circumstance of Life, and have not fallen away in the Day of Temptation; yet, notwithstanding this Regularity of Conduct, you have met with various Afflictions to discompose both Body and Soul, and have receiv'd, instead of a Blessing, what you think a Curse. Before in these Proceedings you call GOD unjust, consider, that the POTTER may deal with his CLAY as seems proper to him, and expose it to what fiery Trial he pleases, either with a View to try its Firmness, or to put it into a proper Temperament. Shall not GOD then have the same Power over his Creatures, as the POTTER has over his CLAY? Shall we receive GOOD at the Hand of GOD, and will we not be content

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to receive **EVIL** also? Observe the Characters of the faithful **ABRAHAM** and holy **JOB**: Did they in their several Trials repine, murmur, or charge **GOD** foolishly? Were they not humble, submissive, obedient? And are you much better than they, that you have the Boldness to say to your **CREATOR**, Why hast thou made me thus? You should rather shew, by your Resignation, your Obedience; and reflect that **GOD**, when he chastises you, looks upon you as **SONS**, and not **BASTARDS**. Temporal Evil therefore is a Blessing, a kindly Monitor of our dependent State, and that we ought to look for a better Country, more durable, eternal in the **HEAVENS**.

AND let us always remember, that the **LORD** ordereth a good Man's going, and maketh his Way acceptable to himself. Tho' he fall, he shall not be cast away; for the **LORD** upholdeth him with his **HAND**.

“ I **HAVE** been young, says the **PSALMIST**,
“ and now am old, and yet saw I never the Righteous

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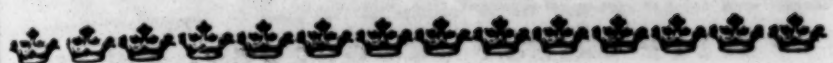
“ teous

“teous forsaken, or his Seed begging their
 “Bread. The Righteous is ever merciful and
 “lendeth, and his Seed is blessed.”

“KEEP therefore INNOCENCY, and take
 “Heed to the Thing that is right; for that, and
 “that only, will bring a Man Peace at the last.”

WHICH that all of us may obtain, may God
 of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.





INNOCENCY,

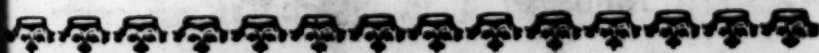
THE ONLY PROPER

QUALIFICATION

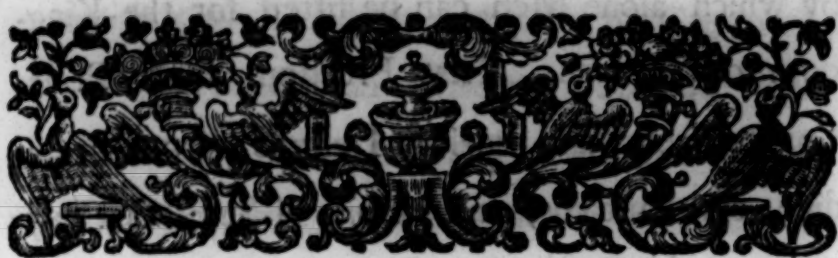
FOR

H E A V E N.

A S E R M O N.



LIBRARY



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S E R M O N.

LUKE xviii. 17.

VERILY I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the KINGDOM of GOD as a little CHILD, shall in no wise enter therein.

INNOCENCE is here look'd upon as the only proper Qualification for HEAVEN. As it consists in a Freedom from every Vice, little CHILDREN, for that Reason, may be justly thought proper Emblems of it. Our SAVIOUR, in the Verse preceeding my Text, tells us expressly, that of such is the KINGDOM of GOD; because they are lively Images and Examples of that good Temper and Disposition,
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by which alone Men can be fitted for the Kingdom of Heaven. That Freedom from Pride, Covetousness, and worldly Designs; from Prejudice, evil Customs, and Habits of Sin; that easy and teachable Disposition of Mind; that Innocence, Plainness, and Simplicity of Heart, which appear in all the Actions of little CHILDREN, are the principal Qualifications which every one of us ought to endeavour to attain, if we would be worthy Members of CHRIST'S Church on EARTH, and Inheritors of his Kingdom in HEAVEN.

BUT it may be ask'd here, How is it possible that Men, whose Minds must almost necessarily, on account of their being conversant with material sensible Objects, contract a vitiated Bias towards the Things of this World, should ever continue in Dispositions and Inclinations as CHILDREN? And if they do not persevere in the like Innocence with Children, Must they be excluded HEAVEN?

IN Answer to which it may be observ'd, that GOD is not such a severe Judge as to be extreme
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QUALIFICATION *for* HEAVEN. 79

in marking what is done amiss by his Creatures ; nor does he require an unfinning Obedience from us, because we have strong Propensities inciting us continually to the Commission of EVIL with GREEDINESS: And supposing, since we are thus fallible by Nature, that we do fall from our Integrity ; yet GOD, who always receives those into Favour that sincerely repent and amend, will forgive us likewise, if, after deviating from the Paths of Peace, we repent us of the Evil, and confirm that Repentance by a Life of Righteousness. If our Intentions are always honourable, and our Actions square with our Intentions, we shall not only as CHILDREN be fitted for the Kingdom of Heaven ; but also as MEN endued with Reason, who have received, and acted according to, the salutary Commands deliver'd to us in the GOSPEL.

MEN then may deserve a higher Reward, in all Probability, than CHILDREN. Children can have only good Dispositions ; but Men may have
not

not only good Dispositions, but likewise something better, consequent upon them, GOOD ACTIONS. Children only think and act as they are taught, and therefore are not properly free Agents. Men, on the contrary, can think and judge for themselves; and if they are sincere in the Examination of every Thing that is proposed to their Understandings, and consequently act according to the Result of such a previous Examination, they will, if they persist in their Sincerity, be receiv'd finally as little CHILDREN into the KINGDOM of HEAVEN.

BUT it may be again ask'd, How is it possible for Men, whose original Seeds of Corruption are strengthen'd by living in a degenerate World, ever to be in Disposition as Children? For, it may be well supposed, that there cannot be the same Innocence, where the original Biass to Ill is necessarily augmented; and therefore Men cannot receive, as a little Child, the Kingdom of Heaven.

QUALIFICATION *for* HEAVEN 81

IN answer to which I shall observe, that, even in Disposition, Men may be as innocent as Children. For even in them we find, too often, Pride, Anger, Malice, Revenge, and a covetous Disposition. But as these bad Passions do not properly proceed from their own Choice; and as their reasoning Faculty is too weak to discern the Distinction between moral Good and Evil; so, if their strong Propensities to Ill should spring forth into Action, we would call such Actions, because the Result of Ignorance and want of Judgment, SINS of INFIRMITY; and consequently would be excusable, thro' the Merits of CHRIST, in the Sight of GOD. But it may be observed at the same Time, that as the Minds of Children are mere Blanks, and are capable of being filled up with either good or bad Principles, so those, under whose Care they are, whether Parents or Masters, should do well to consider, that if they instil bad Principles, either by Precept or Example, into the Minds of Children, they may perhaps in this, but they will assuredly in the next World, repent of such unchristian Behaviour. So true is it, that

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our good or bad Conduct in Life depends chiefly upon the first Impressions given us in our Infancy, and whilst our Reason affords us insufficient Light to guide our Steps thro' the Mazes of Error. But to return :

CHILDREN, as I before observed, have their Propensities to Ill ; and these Propensities often naturally, but always when encouraged and indulged, bud forth into Action. If this be once granted, as Experience but too fatally proclaims that it ought, then it will by Consequence follow, that Men may be in Disposition as Children ; and therefore may, as well as them, obtain eternal Salvation.

FOR why may not Men be indifferent, as indifferent I mean as is consistent with Religion, about the Concerns of this World ? One may certainly live in the World without any criminal Compliances to the bad Customs and Practices in it ; and, if Scripture may be credited, we may both be, if we are properly dispos'd, conversant among MEN, and have likewise our CONVER-

SATION

SATION in HEAVEN. It does not follow, because we may happen to fall into prophane Company, that therefore we conform in a similar Behaviour; but rather such Prophaneness may raise our Abhorrence of such Vileness, and cause us to condemn the mean Practitioners of it: so that we may live like NOAH amidst an INUNDATION of UNGODLINESS, and yet keep free from the general Infection, and have our Minds more inflam'd with Zeal for GOD and his Religion, and consequently our Dispositions more heavenly. In order to encourage such a Disposition in you I shall consider,

I. THE Reasonableness, and,

II. THE Necessity of it.

THE Reasonableness of having always a good Disposition will appear, *first*, from the Advantage that it will bring our Neighbours and ourselves; *secondly*, from its being our best Preparative to HOLINESS; and therefore, our best Passport thro'

thro' the everlasting Doors of Heaven to the KING of GLORY.

THIS Disposition which we meet with in Children must be of great Advantage to Society, because 'tis productive of neither bad Designs, nor bad Practices. For Persons endued with it must be free from Pride, and Covetousness; and consequently must have no ambitious or oppressive Views; must be full of Simplicity, Sincerity, and, what is rarely to be met with, PLAIN DEALING. For tho', as I said before, Children too often discover the bad Passions predominant in them, yet these Passions are generally excited by the Imprudence, or rather impious Folly, of those that attend them; which, by the Way, ought to be an awakening Consideration to all Parents to chuse only such Attendants upon their Children as will cherish benevolent Affections, and check the least Tendency to Vice. And Parents themselves, that are by their Circumstances obliged to have an immediate Eye over their Children, ought to sow no Seeds in their Minds, but what will, by a proper

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QUALIFICATION *for* HEAVEN. 85

per Encouragement, produce a glorious Harvest of corresponding good Actions. And such Parents as neglect this necessary, as well as pleasant Duty, are answerable not only to God, and their own Conscience, but to the Publick, for such careless, immoral, irreligious Behaviour. And it must be a melancholy Consideration to those Parents, who, either by Connivance, Precept, or Example, have contributed to make their unhappy Descendents only fit Companions for the Devil; or to be, what is horrible to think of, the DEVIL'S PROXIES. But this, as the Minds of Children are susceptible of any Impression, may be easily prevented; so true is the Observation, that if you train up a Child in the Way that he should go, when he is old he will not depart, except with great Difficulty, from it.

AND if Men should have such docible, such flexible Dispositions to Good, and were always determin'd to embrace or reject Things according to their Reasonableness or Unreasonableness, or according

according to the present or consequential Good or Ill attending them, we should enjoy no Litigiousness, Quarrels, or Oppression in Civil Life, and no Disputes about the Doctrines or Modes of Worship of this or that particular Church; but we should be all of one Mind, and one FOLD, united under one SHEPHERD, the CAPTAIN of our Salvation, JESUS CHRIST.

THIS Union, however, tho' much desir'd by every good Christian, can never be effected, as long as Men continue in their present unfociable and unchristian Dispositions. Self-Interest, Prejudice, and Bigotry, are the Hinges upon which the Affections of Mankind turn. Few we see so benevolent, or so beneficent, as to perform an Action without a direct or indirect View of Advantage from the Person whom they thus deign to oblige. And some there are, who, notwithstanding their many and great Obligations to the contrary, will not assist the indigent, for this inhuman and impious Reason, because they are *indigent*. An unhappy Turn of Mind this! Unhappy did I say?

Nay,

Nay, I may venture to call it *bellish*, because it naturally leads thither, where DESTRUCTION has no COVERING.

PREJUDICE too, whether in Things of either a political or religious Nature, has almost a necessary Tendency to disunite Men both in Affection and Interest. For when they think that they have separate Interests from one another, especially in Cases of a Civil Nature, they immediately commence Hostilities, by first envying one another, and then by throwing out Reflections, both moral and personal, (without any Regard either to Decency, Justice, or Truth, and much unbecoming common Sense, much less open Professors of Christianity) which are not so much to the Discredit of their Antagonists as themselves; who, because of such an unsociable and unchristian Behaviour, must naturally be look'd upon, I think, in the Eye of impartial Reason, as the very Dregs and Refuse of Mankind.

AND as Prejudice and Bigotry to a Party in
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the political Life, hinder Harmony, and produce, what is hateful to every good and peaceable Disposition, F A C T I O N ; so likewise in Religion, they give Rise to a most unchristian Disposition, which neither Reason nor Revelaion can justify, a furious Spirit of P E R S E C U T I O N . This fiery Zeal, which cannot be according to Knowledge, because the Spawn of Ignorance, implicit Faith, and spiritual Tyranny, Bigotry, and Superstition, extends to all those who rightly differ from them in Matters of Faith and Practice ; or, what ought to cause no Breach of Charity, in mere Ceremony. But such unreasonable Bigots ought to consider, that if they want Charity, that Bond of Peace and Cement of Society, they cannot possibly be fit for that Place, where all is Harmony, where all is Peace and Love, the K I N G D O M of H E A V E N .

A N D as long as Self-Interest, Prejudice, and Bigotry, are the Springs of Action in the human Soul, we may naturally expect, what will break the Chains that link Society together, Envy, Hatred, and inhuman Scenes of Disorder. But
these

QUALIFICATION *for* HEAVEN. 89

these may be easily prevented, by cherishing in our Minds only such Dispositions as will necessarily recommend us not only to the Favour of Men, but, what is infinitely better, to the Friendship of GOD. And GOD has requir'd such Dispositions to be exerted into actual Holiness, that, by such Qualifications, we may be the better fitted for his KINGDOM.

BUT no Man can be holy without an holy Disposition. This must be the necessary Preparative to Purity in Action. We should deal with our Minds as we generally do with a GARDEN, where, before we sow the good Seeds, we extract the Roots of every noxious Weed, lest, by their growing up together with the useful Herbs, they should either choak them at their first Rise, or hinder their growing up to Perfection. If we were to deal thus with our Minds, and endeavour to eradicate every latent Root of Bitterness, and cherish every Seed of Virtue, and transplant from other Soils whatever would contribute to the Dignity and

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true Ornament of the better Part of us, our SOULS, we should not only then have good Dispositions, but those Dispositions would be exerted into actual Holiness. And as one good Disposition produces another, so does one Virtue naturally give Rise to many more, till all the Blank in the tender Mind is filled up with every Thing that is amiable, productive of its own Peace, and promotive of the Happiness of the whole rational Part of the Creation. But this is not often the Case. TARES, that is, dishonourable Notions, are suffer'd to grow up in the human Mind, and they are often cherish'd by those very Persons that ought to endeavour to root them out. And this generally happens with two sorts of Persons; to Persons born to opulent Fortunes, and to the Dregs of the People. When a Man is born to inherit Riches, he is too often induced to think, forming his Judgment from the Behaviour of those about him, that RICHES are the only proper Foundation for HONOUR and ESTEEM. And this confirms him in Error, when he sees Virtue, because meanly clothed, and in tatter'd Robes, neglected, slighted,

ed, affronted. Thus the HUMAN BLADDER is blown into an extravagant Tumor, so that it consequentially forgets the Relation between it and its Fellow-Creatures ; and, what is worse, its Dependance upon that Being who gave it Existence. Thus are wrong Principles taught by Example ; and they are suffered to take Root in young Minds the more easily, because the World gives a Sanction to them, by encouraging the Practice of them.

THE very lowest and illiterate Part of Mankind too, as well as the rich and powerful, has but too commonly abandon'd Dispositions. Sneaking low Tricks, Deceit in every Shape, Impatience of Restraint, Drunkenness, Oaths, Curses, Imprecations, and a vile Propensity to follow the Commands of the Powerful and Opulent, notwithstanding the Injustice of them, are sufficient Proofs of the Badness of their Dispositions, and of their entire Contempt of all moral and religious Truths. No wonder then, that the unhappy Descendants of such worthless Wretches inherit the same Dispositions,

positions, and practise the same Indecencies, since Children are soonest infected by Example, and are easily induced to believe that they cannot do wrong if they tread in their Parents Steps; who, by their Age, ought to know, and whose Interest it is, or at least ought to be, to point out to them the Things that tend both to their present and everlasting Peace. Thus are the DISEASES of the MIND, like those of the BODY, propagated from one polluted Generation to another, till the Long-suffering of GOD, being quite worn out in Expectation of their Amendment, they are entirely eradicated by the Change of the Subject in which they existed.

To prevent which Diseases of the Mind, and the Judgments of GOD, sooner or later, consequent thereupon, we may naturally infer, what I proposed to consider in the *second* Place, the absolute Necessity of having our Dispositions as CHILDREN.

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I OBSERV'D before the bad Effects which evil Dispositions naturally produce, both in the religious and civil Life: I shall therefore shew, under this Head, that if we do not take Care that the Dispositions of our Hearts be good, we must of consequence fail of present and future Happiness. For when the Inclinations and Dispositions of the Heart are bent towards Evil continually, there can be no Ease, and therefore no Happiness. REASON, which should be the governing Principle of the SOUL, and direct the Affections to their proper Objects, no longer presides at the HELM, but is forced to give way to that Destroyer of the HUMAN BARK, the RULING PASSION. When Affection is thus suffered to reign in the Heart of Man, the Mind is blind both to private and publick Interest; no Persuasion can remove the Darkness with which it is involv'd, and no Instruction can enlighten it; and thus 'tis hurried down, if the Grace of GOD interpose not, by the violent STREAM of INCLINATION, into the terrible OCEAN of INEXTINGUISHABLE FLAME.

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To avoid which dismal Unhappiness, 'tis incumbent upon every one of us to keep our Hearts with all Diligence; because out of them are the ISSUES of LIFE or DEATH: For if we do not keep our Hearts pure, nor keep a constant Guard over them, evil Inclinations will spring up, and surrounding Objects will add Life and Vigour to them, till they grow too luxuriant to be controul'd. Thus they will influence both our Belief and Practice. Truth, tho' shining in her original Brightness, cannot gain Admittance into our Hearts when the Mists of Passion are so dark and obscure. For Truth, GOSPEL-TRUTH especially, is of too pure a Nature for a corrupted Heart. All the evil Dispositions latent in it immediately declare War, and put themselves in a Posture of Defence against GOD and Goodness, and against every Thing that has the least Tendency to root them out. It is therefore owing to the evil Dispositions and Inclinations of the Heart, and not to Principle, that we have Infidels amongst us. Such, indeed, when the Affections
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are heated, may own no GOD but BACCHUS, and pay no Devotions to any but him and VENUS; but when Jollity ceases, and the Mind is at Leisure for Reflection; or when THUNDER and LIGHTENING proclaim the avenging JEHOVAH; these Infidels not only in such Circumstances own a GOD, but likewise condemn the bad Dispositions of their Hearts, and the vicious Actions consequent thereupon, and would be glad if the Merits of their despis'd Redeemer could save them from impending Ruin.

BUT that our Case may not be such, and that we may not fail of attaining an eternal Weight of Glory, 'tis incumbent upon us to keep a strict Guard over our Hearts, because they are allowed to be deceitful above all Things. For we naturally, if we have been once deceived, beware of having any Intercourse with the DECEIVER for the future; And we generally search that Place diligently that formerly has conceal'd a THIEF, that would, if not timely prevented, have depriv'd us of
that

that, which, in some Measure, makes Life comfortable, MONEY. If such Care, Caution, and Circumspection is requisite, with regard to Things temporal; certainly, when an Eternity of inexpressible Happiness is at Stake, and when the Attainment of it depends upon our good Behaviour, we should let no corrupt Inclination prevail over our Reason, and deprive us of that, which the gaining of this present World can by no Means counterbalance, ETERNAL GLORY.

AND to this guarding of our Hearts from all IMPURE AFFECTIONS, let us add Prayers to GOD, that he would enable us by his HOLY SPIRIT, not only to be pure in WILL, but likewise in DEED; that thereby, as LITTLE CHILDREN, we may be receiv'd into the KINGDOM of HEAVEN. For without such Holiness no Man shall see the LORD.

WHOM, that all of us may be thus qualified to see, may GOD of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.

A
RELIGIOUS LIFE,
The BEST RETURN for a
NATIONAL DELIVERANCE.

A
S E R M O N,
Preached OCTOBER 9. 1746.
Being the DAY appointed for
The PUBLICK THANKSGIVING
After the DEFEAT of the REBELS.



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A
S E R M O N.

PSAL. viii. 47, 48, 49.

IT is GOD that avengeth me, and subdueth the
PEOPLE under me.

HE delivereth me from mine ENEMIES: Yea thou
liftest me up above those that rise up against me:
Thou hast delivered me from the VIOLENT MAN.

THEREFORE will I give THANKS unto thee,
O LORD, among the HEATHEN; and sing
PRAISES unto thy NAME.

TO shew a becoming Gratitude for Fa-
vours received, is a Duty justly ex-
pected between Man and Man. A
Favour conferr'd supposes a Debt to the Person
that conferr'd it; and where there is a Debt, there
is an Obligation to the Payment of it when Op-
por-

portunity offers. To the Performance of this every Man is obliged, tho' human Laws sometimes cannot enforce it. The Law of Nature loudly proclaims, and Religion suggests to us, that it is an Argument of a mean ungenerous Spirit, to be forgetful of Benefits.

IF Gratitude be allowed to be a Duty, as it certainly is, between Man and Man, the Obligation to the Practice of it is greater both according to the Nature, and likewise in relation to the Bestower of it. When Man gives, he does not often consider either the Goodness of the Thing he gives, or the Worthiness of the Object upon whom he confers it. Ostentation too often gives Rise to his Largeesses, and Fancy, not Judgment, directs him in the Choice of a Favourite. Hence, it often happens, that many are made INSTRUCTORS of the Ignorant, before they have learnt what ought principally to be regarded, the primary Intention of their Office. Hence, some are made INTERPRETERS of the LAWS, whose sole Aim seems to be nothing more than to sink those, whom
they

they ought to raise, into the greatest Poverty, Hence, others sit in the JUDGMENT-SEAT, who have neither Patience, Abilities, nor Integrity, to be proper Dispensers of Rewards and Punishments; and it may be laid down as a Maxim, that those that are unjust to themselves with regard to their true Interest, can never be inflexibly just to others.

MEN then, you see, have Offices often assign'd them for which they are either naturally or morally unfit. And that this should be the Case, why should we wonder, since Interest, Prejudice Humour and Caprice, are generally the chief Managers of the Affections. And since Man is guided by such uncertain fallible Directors, it would be an Impropriety to expect Favours and Benefits always properly conferr'd either upon the WISE OR FOOLISH.

NOT so the all-wise Governor of the Universe. He both sees, and gives us, what is fittest for us in every Circumstance of Life. He maketh Rain to de-

descend upon the just and unjust, and gives to both, by his ordinary Providence, fruitful Seasons; but he reserves in the mean time more particular Blessings for those that diligently seek him. He, no Doubt, gives Poverty to those who in Prosperity might set up their HORN and a stiff NECK, and by that Means both forget themselves and their GOD. And sometimes too he permits the Wicked to go on prosperously, and their Affairs to run on in an easy smooth Course, till he sees them ripe for Destruction; and then he tumbles them down from their improper Eminence, not only for their own Punishment, but to be standing Monuments of his just Dealing towards ungodly Men. When a Nation has in a great Measure forsaken the Allegiance it owes to that Being to whom it is indebted for being a Nation; when it is grown proud, ambitious, luxurious, and executeth not true Judgment; when Pomp, Wealth, and Titles, entirely engross the Attention of the Inhabitants; when Vice appears upon the Stage of Life, not only countenanced, but encouraged; when private Vices have been inculcated as publick Benefits; when

Laws,

Laws, which were enacted for the Prohibition of Intemperance, are repealed for the sake of raising Money to the Government; when Magistrates, whose Business it is to see Laws put in Execution, are careless, and are afraid to offend a vicious Neighbour; is it strange, when such Things as THESE are permitted and encouraged in a Nation, that GOD should punish such a KINGDOM as this?

No Wonder then, that War, Bloodshed, and Death, should be consequent upon such a Scene of Disorder, Corruption, and every evil Work. No Wonder that Sickness walks in Darkness, or that Fevers destroy at Noon-day. When a Nation is almost totally corrupted, a desperate Remedy is required to bring it to a proper Sense of its Duty; and such is the heinous Nature of Ingratitude for the innumerable Blessings of Life showered down upon us by Providence, that it naturally kindles the Sparks of the DIVINE WRATH against us; and it is no Wonder if then we are visited with SCOURGES and with a ROD of IRON. Had
we

we in the Times of Peace walked humbly with our GOD, and been properly grateful for the Blessings of PEACE; had we, instead of Luxury, practised Frugality, instead of either, an entire Neglect of, or an indolent dispassionate Carelessness in Religion; had we been sincere and resolute in the Worship of the true GOD, he would not, in all Probability, have permitted civil Discord to have raged horribly amongst us; or, if he did, would not have seemed to LAUGH at our CALAMITY, or to have MOCKED when our FEAR came; when our Fear came from the NORTH as a DESOLATION, and our DESTRUCTION was approaching as a WHIRLWIND.

NOTWITHSTANDING, however, our notorious and repeated TRANSGRESSIONS, he has at last turn'd away his fiery INDIGNATION, and in the Midst of JUDGMENT remembred Mercy. Because he has thus delivered us from our ENEMIES, and has lifted us up above those that rose up against us, because he delivered us
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from the VIOLENT MAN: Therefore will we give THANKS unto THEE, O LORD, among the HEATHEN, and sing PRAISES unto thy NAME.

DAVID used these Words in order to shew his Gratitude for his Deliverance from the unjust Persecutions of SAUL, who is here exhibited to us under the Character of the VIOLENT MAN; and as we of this Nation have suffered the like Injustice from the Violent, I shall shew,

I. THAT it is incumbent upon us to be grateful for the DELIVERANCE from VIOLENCE: And,

II. THAT our GRATITUDE should rise in proportion to our Deliverance: And,

III. THAT the best Return we can make for such mighty Deliverances, is a RELIGIOUS LIFE.

FIRST then, I am to shew, that it is incumbent

bent upon us to be grateful for such a DELIVERANCE from VIOLENCE; our Obligations to which will best appear from the Consideration of a superintending PROVIDENCE over us, and consequently from the Notion of our Dependance upon Providence. If it be once admitted, that we are GOD's Workmanship, and that we owe not our Existence to that imaginary Being, CHANCE, we must in consequence of such an Admission deduce the CREATOR's Providential Care over us: For it is absurd to imagine, that a good Being would give Existence to his Creatures, and would not at the same Time consult their Well-being. The same Goodness that prompted him to *create*, prompted him likewise to *preserve* what he created. We see the whole animal Creation anxiously striving to support and protect their Young: Shall Animals of confin'd contracted Sense endeavour to preserve their Species, and shall not the CREATOR of all Things have the same Providential Care over his Creatures? As he has created, so will he feed the FOWLS of the AIR; and as he has not only given Existence

ence to the FLOWERS of the FIELD, but likewise has made them appear more splendid than SOLOMON in all his Glory; shall He not, because ye are much better than they, provide for you, O ye of little Faith?

REASON then, not only proclaims a PROVIDENCE, but a *watchful* one too. "It is about
"our PATH, and about our BED, and spieth
"out all our WAYS; if we ascend into HEAVEN, it is *there*, or if we descend into the nearest
"thermost Parts of the EARTH, it is *there* also."
When Violence and Oppression lay waste a Nation, Is it not probable, that Providence directs the Storm of War, and permits it to rage furiously, in order to humble the SINNER, and make him *repent and live*? This, no Doubt, has often been the Instrument of Vengeance in the Hand of GOD; and the Finger of Omnipotence never appears more eminently conspicuous than in Times of Sedition, Tumult, War. Have we not seen lately a victorious ENEMY loitering like the OLD CARTHAGENIAN, as if infatuated, when, in all human
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Probability, it might have seized the CAPITAL? Have we not seen even our own TROOPS, who before had braved Danger with the utmost Intrepidity, fly when there was no great Occasion for Fear, and seek for Shelter when no Enemy pursued? And have we not seen the Enemy suspend their Pursuit, when, by pursuing, they might, in all human Judgment, entirely have destroy'd our Army? Such Behaviour as this, so contrary to true Policy, so directly clashing with their true Interest, seems to point out the interposing Hand of Providence; who confounds the most deep-laid Schemes of designing Men, in order to vindicate his Glory, and to give evident Demonstration, that the RACE is not to the swift, nor the BATTLE to the strong; that no Arm of FLESH might boast and say, that "with my own RIGHT-HAND have I got myself the VICTORY.

WHEN Providence thus visibly appears in the Defence of a Nation, and has made the crafty violent Man fall into the PIT which he had made for others; when it has made the STORMS of
WAR

WAR a CALM, so that the WAVES thereof are STILL, Ought not the People, that have thus the Blessings of Peace conferr'd upon them, to give the greatest Tokens of Thankfulness? If we own a Providence, as every Man in his Senses must, Gratitude is due to it for its ordinary Care over us; but when it more evidently affords us its Protection from the violent Man, when he had brought Desolation upon our Country, Is it not high Time to be grateful? A PAGAN, directed only by the Light of Nature, could, for his Deliverance, slay whole HECATOMBS of Animals, in order to shew Gratitude to his GODS. Shall a PAGAN part with a large Portion of his Substance, in order to appease his false GODS? And shall not he, who is assuredly the TRUE GOD and our Protector, and who has done great Things for us already, receive from us the small Tribute of PRAISE and THANKSGIVING?

MANY, too many, I am afraid, if one may be allowed to form an Estimate of their Behaviour towards GOD, from their Conduct towards their
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Fellow-Creatures, would be glad to receive Favours at the Hand of GOD ALMIGHTY, but would be ready to give no Acknowledgment for the Reception of them. They seem rather to receive them as a DEBT, and as if GOD ALMIGHTY was obliged to shower down his Mercies upon his Creatures, let their Behaviour towards him be what it will. In Time of Calamity, indeed, they can shew all the dismal Symptoms of Sorrow; such as the soft Gate, the ghastly melancholly Aspect, Eyes drowned in Tears, and now and then directed towards Heaven, deep Sighs, solemn Groans, mournful Complaints, with the additional frequent Invocation of, "LORD, have MERCY on us!" But when the Thunder that seemed to threaten their Destruction has spent itself, and the Storm is entirely blown over; and when, by the Serenity of the Heavens, it appears that all Apprehension of Danger is past; the GOD that preserved them in such Danger, that rides in the WHIRLWIND, and directs the STORM, is immediately forgot; they remember not his Works, nor sing his Praise; but, like true SONS of

of BELIAL, they shew their Gratitude by their Drunkenness, and their Thankfulness by their loud Hymns to BACCHUS.

THESE Things ought not so to be. GOD is not praised by loud tumultuous Joy, nor by Debauchery is he honoured. Such Honour and such Praise is the Sacrifice of Fools. Such Honour is Mockery, and such Praise Ingratitude. When GOD is truly honour'd, Men frequent his TEMPLE, not the TAVERN, and there from the Heart celebrate the mighty ACTS of the LORD; their Joy is serene, pure, peaceable, lasting, and always in some Measure proportioned to the Benefits received; which was the *second* Thing I proposed to observe.

How great our Joy ought to be, will be best estimated by taking a View of the Dangers we have been delivered from. TYRANNY, whether it respects the Body or the Mind, has in all Ages been justly look'd upon as the worst of Evils. No Property or Civil Rights are secured where it obtains;

tains; and there can be no Freedom ~~in~~ Religion, where implicit Faith to spiritual Governors is insisted upon. In each Case our Lives and Fortunes are continually exposed: An Expression only glancing towards Liberty, either Civil or Religious, might be, as it often has been, misinterpreted for Treason; and an opulent Fortune might be, as it often has been, a sufficient Reason for taking away the Life of the Possessor.

BUT that Tyranny is still the more oppressive, when it forces the Mind to assent to Things which are entirely disagreeable to Reason. As the Good of the People is the End of all Government, that End is generally frustrated where absolute Monarchy prevails. Kings, as they are but Men, are easily induced by Ambition to be lavish of the Blood and Fortunes of their People. Their Will is their Law; and their Sword, which is as violent as their Will, is both the Guardian and Executioner of it. Interest is the grand Principle by which they are moved; but the Misfortune is, their own Grandeur, not the Good of the Subject, is
look'd

look'd upon as their proper Interest. Men of Integrity therefore, because entirely averse to such Proceedings, are the Objects of their Hatred; and because they are look'd upon as great Impediments in their Execution of unreasonable, and therefore unjust Projects, they must be removed out of the Way; and they must suffer, because they had the Courage to STEM the TORRENT of CORRUPTION, and be just to THEMSELVES, their COUNTRY, their GOD. In such a dismal Situation, a gloomy melancholy Aspect is deemed TREASON, and to whisper Liberty is DEATH.

THESE are the dismal Effects of absolute Power, when centering in some Individuals. When indeed they are not invested with Power, they can assume the Appearance of the softest Humanity, and practise, in order to deceive the unwary, all the smoother Arts of Persuasion. But when they have seized the Helm of Government, they will immediately neglect the People's Good,

that known CHART by which they ought to steer their Course, and substitute in its Stead that most variable of all Directors, their own Humour.

AND this, nay more than this, we might have expected, if the late violent Man had succeeded in his pernicious Schemes. Could we have hoped for Security of Liberty, when he not only was bred up at the Foot of Tyranny, but also suck'd it in with his very Milk? And suppose he were really descended from the STUARTS, which is very much question'd, could this Descent be any Recommendation to him? Have we not seen them endeavouring always to lay aside our Parliaments, which, if honest, we ought to look upon as the Guardians of our Liberties? Have we not known them oppress, by unjust Taxes; and force those that were to execute Justice to give their Assent to Injustice. And can it be imagin'd, that this supposed SON of VIOLENCE would behave better than his *heroick* Forefathers? None sure could imagine that he would, except the needy, the factious, and such as hold that imaginary Doctrine
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of HEREDITARY RIGHT; or the Bigotry, Superstition, and Idolatry of the Church of ROME.

BESIDES, what could we have hoped for from one who was at the Head of a bigotted Party, and had his own Head fill'd with ITALIAN Superstition. It is meritorious with Men of this Stamp, tho' contrary to Reason, or the more glorious Light of the Gospel, to propagate their unreasonable and wicked Opinions by FIRE and SWORD. I call them *unreasonable*, because they have no Foundation in Reason; and *wicked*, because contrary to Scripture, our great CRITERION, by which we ought to judge of Doctrines, whether they be of GOD or MAN.

I MIGHT here give you a Detail of the several impious Doctrines of the ROMANISTS, and of the pernicious Tendency of each, in order to give you a just Notion of the Dangers you have escaped, and to raise in you a just Sense of Gratitude for your Deliverance from them; but I shall only observe at present, that as both our temporal and
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eternal Welfare have been particularly consulted, by our Deliverance from civil and religious Tyranny, we have the highest Reason imaginable to ascribe unto our DELIVERER, Worship and Strength, and to give the LORD the Honour due unto his Name; because his WRATH has endured little more than the Twinkling of an EYE; because he has given STRENGTH to his PEOPLE, and to his INHERITANCE the BLESSINGS of PEACE.

BUT as the Praise of the Lips of itself is no Gratitude, but mere Hypocrisy, I shall consider as I proposed, *lastly*, That the best Returns we can make for such Deliverances is a RELIGIOUS LIFE.

As Obedience to a PARENT's just Commands is looked upon as sufficient Gratitude for a PARENT's Care; or as a SUBJECT's dutiful Allegiance is a suitable as well as an expected Return for a PRINCE's Protection; so a Regularity of Conduct, both in Religion and Morality,

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is justly expected by our gracious CREATOR. As long as we are observant of his just Commands, so long we are intitled to his Favour and Protection; but when we set at nought his COUNSEL, and will receive none of his REPROOF; when we leave the Paths of UPRIGHTNESS, to walk in the Ways of DARKNESS, and rejoice to do EVIL, and delight in the FROWARDNESS of the *Wicked*, Is it in the least probable that GOD should still be gracious, long-suffering, and of great Goodness, and send PEACE upon our JERUSALEM? Should we not rather expect Judgment instead of Mercy, Confusion instead of Order, and Discord instead of Harmony? Disagreements and Civil Rage amongst Individuals, as well as Kingdoms, are generally consequent upon Immorality and Irreligion; and these are generally the Effects of Riches, and Power, and too great Plenty. When Men are placed in this eminent Situation, their Minds wax wanton, they forget the Donor of these good Gifts, and set up their HORN, and a stiff NECK; their EYES are lofty, and their EYE-LIDS are lifted up. The
fatal

fatal Consequence of this Pride is want of Charity, Meekness, Patience, and a mutual Forbearance of Injuries ; from whence arise that motly and hellish Crew of Monsters, Sedition, Tumult, War, Bloodshed, and Death.

IN order to prevent which, it is incumbent upon each of us in our respective Stations to do to all Men, as we would they should do unto us in the like Circumstances ; always remembering, that our present and future Happiness depend upon our Practice of this golden Rule. It will make us not only of one Mind in an House, but make us likewise live like a City at Unity with itself, whose Inhabitants are virtuous amidst Abundance, and religious without Superstition, both in Prosperity and Adversity. Being thus armed with the BREAST-PLATE of RIGHTEOUSNESS, the SWORD of the SPIRIT, and the HELMET of SALVATION, they are able to curb the Insolence of an haughty Enemy, and gain, thro' the Assistance of an ALMIGHTY Protector, the unspeakable Advantages of a lasting PEACE.

THIS,

THIS, if we are not wanting to ourselves, will always be our Case. If we do not fail in our Duty, GOD will not fail us. "His EYES are
"always over the Righteous, and his EARS are
"open unto their PRAYERS." Why then will we any longer provoke him to Anger by our evil Deeds, and make him send among us, what we have lately severely felt, the EVILS of WAR? What we have felt we should receive as a fatherly Correction, as a ROCK upon which our BARKS, by the Negligence of their MASTERS, had nigh split. And that we may not for the future hazard them against it, we should take Care that the Tide of Passion swell not too high, and force us by its Violence into evident Destruction. This, if we do, we shall make a suitable Return for the Deliverance we have lately received, and thereby recommend ourselves to the Favour of that Being who only can protect us, make us dwell safely, and free us from the Apprehension of every EVIL.

WHICH, that all of us for the future may be
de-

120 *On the* PUBLIC THANKSGIVING.

delivered from, may God, the grand Disposer
of all Events, of his infinite Mercy grant, thro'
the Merits of JESUS CHRIST our LORD,
Amen.



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THE
PRINCIPAL CAUSES
OF
P R I D E,
AND ITS
E F F E C T S,
As DISCOVERABLE in
HUMAN NATURE,
CONSIDERED.
In THREE SERMONS.

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THE
PRINCIPAL CAUSES
OF

P. R. I. D. R. I. D. R. I. D.
AND
F. H. F. H. F. H. F. H.



As discovered in
HUMAN NATURE
CONSIDERED

IN THREE SERMONS

By the Rev. John Wesley

At the Anniversary of the Society of the Friends of the African Slave

At the City of London, on the 25th of January, 1787

Printed by J. Johnson, in Pall-mall

1787



S E R M O N I.

PROV. XXX. 13.

*THERE is a GENERATION, O how lofty are
their EYES! and their EYE-LIDS are lift-
ed up.*

THIS short Description seems to point
out to us PRIDE, and one parti-
cular Property of it, CONTEMPT.
Loftiness of Eyes seems to intimate the inward
Temper of Mind, a particular Distemper which it
labours under; and by the Eye-Lids being lifted
up, it discovers the Effect, which is produced by
this Distemper. As every Distemper in the Body
has its particular Symptom, and consequently is
discoverable by it; so is every Distemper of the
Mind express'd by some outward Sign, as de-
monstrative of the inward Ailment. PRIDE
then,

then, that empty Tumor, is well signified by high LOOKS and lofty EYES; because every Tumor occasions a Stiffness of the Part affected; and if it be inward, and has any Relation to, or Communication with the outward Parts, an external Effect will be produced proportionable to the inward Cause. Thus PRIDE naturally swells the EYE, gives an high, indirect, unobserving CAST: And the EYE-LIDS lifted up signifies not only PRIDE, but also that the Person thus touch'd with it, is something, or, at least thinks himself something, of a more exalted Nature than those of the same Species with himself; and therefore it denotes CONTEMPT, which, of all other Effects, is least becoming frail human Nature, except it has for its Object, that greatest Disgrace of human Nature, VICE.

BUT it may be ask'd, Is Pride in no Sense commendable? Must it be condemn'd without Reserve? And will it admit of no Limitation? May not a Man be said to be ambitious of be-

having well; and Ambition always supposes Pride as the Foundation of it?

IN this Case, where Pride is suppos'd the Spring of good Actions, it is taken for COURAGE or a SENSE of DUTY. When a Man contradicts Sense, and acts in Opposition to the common receiv'd Modes of Behaviour in the World, tho' he may be said, in the vulgar Way of speaking, to be proud or ambitious of Well-doing; yet such Actions cannot derive their Original from PRIDE: because a bad Cause, such as Pride is, cannot produce a good Effect. Such Actions therefore must have a better and more noble Cause; and, I think, no better than the before mentioned can be assign'd, namely, a SENSE of DUTY convey'd to Man by the GOSPEL-DISPENSATION. For this Sense has a noble End propos'd to it, HAPPINESS; and no Wonder that Courage, and all the Faculties of the Soul, are exerted in order to the Attainment of it.

BUT again, it may be ask'd, if a Man that
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has behav'd well, and even excell'd his Fellow-Creatures in performing the Duties of the GOSPEL, can have, for that Reason, a Toleration for being proud: For good Actions always suppose MERIT; and consequently, one would imagine, that where there is Merit, a Man may think *well* of himself, or, in other Words, has Reason to be *proud*?

SUPPOSING then, according to the Question, that a Man acts up to the Prescriptions of the GOSPEL; and supposing even more, that he even performs every Precept; he does not therefore merit, because he does only his Duty, and by Consequence has no Reason to be proud. But, if we consider the Infirmities of human Nature, its Proneness to, and its several Lapses, notwithstanding its utmost Caution, into SIN, we may reasonably conclude, that Pride was no more made for fallible Man, than the JEWEL for the SWINE'S SNOUT.

BESIDES, there is a Difference between Pride,
and

and a Man's thinking *well* of himself. PRIDE is *puffed up*, and supposes more Merit than it really has ; it is bold, haughty, presumptuous, requires a particular Respect and Deference to be paid to it, is a SCORNER, and a Raisher of Contention ; and when the Sparks of Discord have nigh spent their Force, one Hint or single Expression will add Fuel to the most extinguish'd Fire, and blow it into FLAME.

WHEREAS, the thinking *well* of one's self, tho' it does suppose comparative Merit as the Foundation of it, is not inconsistent with the greatest HUMILITY. Because, if we act according to the Rule of Life deliver'd to us in the GOSPEL, we must be virtuous, and more than nominal Christians ; and consequently, there will arise from such a Tenor of Action, a tender SELF-COMPLACENCY, or sort of SELF-ESTEEM, which the *wise* Disposer of the DRAMA has, out of his great Goodness, given us ; not only as a Fore-taste of our future Allotment, but likewise as a present Reward and Encouragement for us to be-

have

have well in our several future Scenes upon the Stage of Life. We may then think well of ourselves upon a very laudable Account ; because, upon comparing our Lives and Conversation with the G O S P E L R U L E, we find, in the Result of the Comparison, that an entire Harmony reigns between our Faith and Practice ; and consequently the Consciousness of having acted our Parts well upon this great Theatre, must not only, in the still Scenes of Life, but also when we sail upon a troubled Ocean, in a shatter'd B A R K, afford us the greatest Comfort imaginable. Thus pleasant is one self-approving Hour ; it shews the Soul's Health, and contributes to the Satisfaction of the Body : whereas P R I D E is the Disease of the Soul, and is to it, what too great Fulness of B L O O D is to the Body, the Vessels must burst by being overstrained, and a Dissolution is the soonest occasion'd by a T U M O R.

B U T, it may be asked, whether there be not a D I G N I T Y in human Nature ; and if there is, that,

that very Expression supposes a Reason to ground
PRIDE upon

THOSE who talk the most loudly of Man's DIGNITY, may mention it upon three Accounts: either because it may boast of a divine Original; or, upon account of its future Prospect; or, because it is endow'd with a reasoning Principle, which enables us to discover, in some Measure, its Duty towards that Being, who gave it its Existence. And tho' many talk of this Dignity in any of these Senses, yet they do not suppose that Man has sufficient Reasons to be proud; since the WORM boasts the same ORIGINAL; since HUMILITY becomes a PILGRIM that has no continuing City here, and that is in quest after one to come; and since Reason, at the same Time that it evidences the Strength, gives demonstrative Proof of the Weakness of unassisted human Nature.

SINCE then PRIDE is not, in any of the before mentioned Cases, a commendable Quality;

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and

and since there is a GENERATION whose EYES are lofty, and whose EYE-LIDS are lifted up, I shall consider,

I. THE principal CAUSES of PRIDE. And,

II. TWO particular SPECIES of it, and their EFFECTS, as discoverable in human Nature. And,

LASTLY, I shall conclude with an Exhortation to HUMILITY.

FIRST then, I am to consider the principal CAUSES of PRIDE; and these are, Strength, Beauty, Riches, Honour, and Knowledge; concerning each of which I shall speak in the Order they now stand. As to the *first*, namely, STRENGTH, we shall have little Reason to be proud of it, if we do but consider how infinitely weak it is with respect to GOD that made us, how frail with respect to DURATION, and how liable every Moment to be lost. We generally

value, or at least ought to value Things, either upon account of their DURATION or USEFULNESS. A Man's Strength, in the ordinary Course of Things, cannot be of long Continuance; it may stay with him in the Bloom and Meridian of Life: But when he descends the Hill, the Blood no longer performs the same brisk Circulation; Nature grows weak and languid, and Sickness, at last, puts a final Period to the Ruins of old Age. Thus this boasted STRENGTH, or rather Weakness, is soon brought to DESOLATION, and becomes the FOOD of WORMS. Such a Consideration is sufficient, one would imagine, to hinder us from rejoicing in having strong Bones, Nerves, and Sinews. But, considering the many Accidents of Life, which in an Instant can deprive us of our mighty STRENGTH, we have no Reason to glory in it upon account of its DURATION.

ITS USEFULNESS however, one would think, might furnish us with Matter for Pride; since by it we are enabled to surmount great Difficulties, and endure the several Vicissitudes of
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FORTUNE with the greater Firmness, and are in a Capacity to attack the common Enemy of our Country (for * Courage is oftner owing to Constitution than Reflection) with greater Magnanimity.----Notwithstanding 'tis attended with these and many such Advantages, yet we ought not to conclude from thence, that a Man should so far forget himself as to be ignorant that it is the GIFT of GOD; and that 'tis the same Being that he ought to be grateful to for the Continuance of it.----Besides, if our CREATOR had thought it very perfective of our Natures, it would not be so unequally distributed amongst the human Race; for it often happens that STRENGTH is void of WISDOM, and that the greatest Souls take up their Residence in the minutest Bodies: which certainly is a presumptive Argument, at least, that we ought not be proud of our great STRENGTH: But, if Men will be proud of it, let them herd with the Brute-Creation, who enjoy it in a much greater Perfection, without shewing they are proud of

* *Vide* GIBSON'S Anatomy, p. 263.

of it; and then they may learn, like NEBUCHAD-NEZZAR, not to be high-minded, but fear.

BUT if nothing else would bring such proud Men to Reason, the bad Effects consequent upon this sort of Pride might be sufficient to terrify them from thus misplacing their Affections. Contention, Duelling, Bloodshed, and Death, are too often the mournful Attendants upon it. Such proud Contemners of HEAVEN do not consider, that a BLESSING is particularly pronounced upon those who are the Maintainers of PEACE; and that they, and they particularly, shall be called the CHILDREN of GOD.

As Strength affords no Reason for Pride; so neither does BEAUTY, a Set of Features or Complexion, nor a just Harmony and Proportion between the several Parts of the Body. The FLOWERS of the FIELD are just Emblems of BEAUTY, and are a lively Representation of its Frailty and short Duration. It appears charming in the Spring and Summer of Life; but in its
Win-

Winter, scarce any faint Traces or Resemblance, of what it was, appear. Hollow Eyes, a wrinkled furrowed Front, and meagre Cheeks, are the dismal Exchanges; and make us reflect upon this present Earth, which, by its Ruins, gives us a faint Idea of the Beauty of the ancient World. To this unpleasant State the most consummate BEAUTY will be reduced by OLD AGE. It is not, however, the only Enemy that Beauty has to encounter with; the whole Family of DISEASES are set in Battle-Array against it, and attack it very often in the Bloom of Life, and bring it to a sudden Desolation. But how dismal is the Condition of a Beauty either decay'd by Sickness or Old Age! Can she lose this Cause of her Pride without a Sigh? Nay, rather does she not shed Floods of Tears at the very Thought of it? Is she not dejected, fullen, melancholy? And, what is worst of all, when she appears abroad, is she not conscious that those, whom she formerly contemn'd, will scorn her, and turn her to Ridicule? Will not the Neglect of cultivating her better Part, and of procuring what is above all Price, and the greatest

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Ornaments of her Sex, the Beauties of the Mind, strike her dumb with Amazement at her own ignorant Choice? What is it now that she has left to charm Mankind with in the Room of Beauty? Has she good Sense; nay, has she tolerable unimprov'd Sense? Do not her former Admirers wonder at themselves for thinking her a WIT whilst she had Beauty? She mostly resembles an IDOL placed in a magnificent TEMPLE, whose Proportions are just, Features regular, and Varnish exquisite. In such a Situation the Spectators think something more than Human inhabits the Place, till TIME, that great Discoverer of human Vanities, makes the Temple and Idol gradually decay, and moulder into its primitive Atoms: And how ridiculous must it be to find, after so many Years of Idolatry, instead of a DEITY, an unthinking IDOL! Thus a proud BEAUTY appears upon the Stage of Life; where Art and Nature equally contribute to the Decoration of her Externals; where she has similar Devotion paid to her, and much the same wrong-headed unthinking Attendants, till Time or Accident discovers
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the Cheat, and frees her Admirers from their impious Devotions.

BEAUTY, indeed, when attended with Innocence, and cloath'd in Humility, attract strongly the Eyes of the Beholders, awes the Libertine into Virtue, silences, by a constant Perseverance in Well-doing, the Stings of Envy and Detraction, humanizes the cruel, and polishes the Savage into Man. But such a divine Person is a Rarity: It appears only sometimes in the World like a METEOR; which, tho' it enlightens, astonishes the Spectator, and fills them with nothing but Admiration.

BEAUTY then, when unattended with Virtue and good Sense, must chuse itself, as 'tis of a social Nature, Companions of a degenerate Kind; and there are too many to press into the Service. VICES, of all Complexions, present themselves as VOLUNTIERS; and the Mind being at Leisure, 'tis no Wonder that they gain Admittance, and that Follies prevail in the Absence of WISDOM.

Why

PRIDE *in* HUMAN NATURE. 137

Why should we any longer admire that Pride and Vanity are the Handmaids of Beauty? since all the Avenues to the Soul are not guarded by Wisdom and Prudence; and since that busy flattering Thing within us must have Materials to work upon; and since there is no nearer an Object of Thought than SELF, it may be an easy Consequence to be proud of this accidental, transitory, personal Perfection, whose Enjoyment is TROUBLE, and whose End is BITTERNESS. Besides, as in SEDITION, there are never wanting Incendaries to blow up the Sparks of Discord into Flame, so it happens to a beautiful Person: Encomiums, Praise, Adulation, are generally the baneful Poison serv'd up to BEAUTY: Each Passage to the Heart therefore should be fortified by WISDOM; otherwise the Poison will work and destroy that Virtue, most becoming frail Human Nature, HUMILITY.

If Beauty, indeed, was of a durable Nature, there might be some Excuse for being proud of it: But since 'tis rather an imaginary than a real

Good ; and since 'tis a Snare rather than a Blessing to the Possessor ; since it leads People to the Cultivation of the Body, to the Neglect of the better Part, the Soul ; and since 'tis almost as frail as the FLOWER of the FIELD ; we should no longer, for these Reasons, be proud of Beauty : But, if we will, let us consider that to be proud of a Frailty, and consequently of a Weakness, is the Disgrace, the DEATH of REASON.

BUT, as frail and perishing as Strength and Beauty are, yet, in the true Estimate of Things, we have less Reason to be proud of RICHES ; since they are more foreign to us, and contribute nothing to the Perfection of our Natures ; since they are said to make themselves WINGS and to fly away ; and since they ought to be valued according to the Use that is made of them. We ought therefore rather to be proud of the Usefulness of Riches, than Riches themselves ; because it is not possible that inanimate Matter should have any intrinsic Merit in it. One would imagine, that a little shining Metal would not make us look
big,

big, and attract our Attention more than what is of infinitely more Consequence, the TREASURES of HEAVEN. But, 'tis said, that RICHES make the GENTLEMAN: And so it seems, if we would form our Judgment from the general Behaviour of the World. If a Man has a splendid Fortune, he is thought to have Reason to be proud; and such a Deference is generally paid this Son of Fortune, that he begins to think himself Master of some Qualification that he did not perceive before. No Wonder then that this Man of OPULENCE and CONDITION, considering that he has so many cringing, fawning Sycophants about him, becomes his own IDOL. Notwithstanding, however, the wrong Judgment of the World in general, it has been justly observ'd, that Manners and good Sense constitute the Man, without taking the additional APPARATUS of Fortune into Consideration. Our Necessities, indeed, and Conveniences of Life, without mentioning them as necessary in every State, make Riches valuable. They may be splendid Proofs of HUMILITY, and other Christian Graces; they may, by our feed-

feeding the hungry, and instructing the ignorant, and other Instances of Christian Charity, not only be the happy Passports thro' the Gates of true FAME here; but, what is inexpressibly better, convey us to a glorious heavenly JERUSALEM, where are RIVERS of PLEASURE at GOD's Right-hand for evermore. Who then in his Senses would make any other Use of Riches? Who any longer would make them the Instruments of Pride, Ambition, Pomp, and Grandeur? Nay, who, that has any Reflection, would place any Trust in *uncertain* Riches? Do they shew any GOD LIKE POWER? Can they save or deliver from PAIN? Or, can they free us from DEATH? Are they not rather ofteneft the Instruments of Pain, and the infallible Cause of a sudden Death? Why then should we look upon them as our Support and ROCK of DEFENCE, since the Hour of DEATH, the most solemn Part of Time allow'd to Mortality, discovers their Weakness and want of Power? They are then seen with Impartiality, and found, like all other Idols of Mankind, but VANITY.

BUT

BUT ought not that to be exceedingly valued that procures us all the Satisfaction in Life, and makes LIFE'S CUP go sweetly down? Ought not that which procures us Friends, Dependents, Equipage, rich Lands, magnificent Buildings, and the PRIDE of Life, to gain our Affections more than any thing besides? Would we not be ungrateful if we did not set our Hearts upon them?

WE would be ungrateful if we *did* set our Hearts upon them. GOD will not suffer divided Affections; for he is a jealous GOD, and will not allow of any Thing to stand in Competition with him. 'Tis reasonable that it should be so. Are not we his Workmanship? Did he not fashion us? And, if he did, as Reason and Revelation loudly proclaim that he did, is it not reasonable that the Creature should pay Homage to the CREATOR in Token of his Dependence? If in civil Life one petty PRINCE shall pay Homage to another of superior Dignity for some little earthly Dominion; how much more agreeable to Reason is it, that he, who giveth Life and every good Thing, should

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receive daily Homage of PRAISE and THANKSGIVING, from those he has created? Besides, is it not absurd to love a Creature more than the CREATOR? Are not Riches his Creatures, and are they not fram'd by the wise Disposer of all Things for our Use? We ought not then to turn GOD's Mercies to our Destruction, but to make them subservient to one great End we should always have in view, the SALVATION of our SOULS. This will always make Riches flow in their proper Channel, and their Stream will convey us regularly and uniformly till we reach the Ocean of ETERNITY. If we make Riches our STAY, our BOAST, our COMFORT, and only Support, it would be no Wonder if GOD say to us as he did to the rich Man in the GOSPEL, "Ye FOOLS, "this Night your SOULS are required of you." This Exertion of his Power would shew the Nothingness of Riches, and his Right of Dominion.

AND tho' Riches are said to procure us the Satisfaction of Life, yet the glittering Outside of an ample Fortune is too often like the DOCTOR'S
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MEDICINE, or the WHITED SEPULCHRE; Poison or Rottenness are generally latent under these specious Coverings, and are true Emblems of high Life, Pomp, and Splendor. Men only see the gilded EXTERNAL; they cannot see Care, Envy, Malice, Ambition, and all the Passions, strengthened by luxurious Living, by Indulgence, and for want of proper Controul. Could Men see these licentious unrestrained Passions of the Mind exerted, and PRIDE directing this Storm of the Soul, they might have a very good Notion of a raging SEA, where Waves succeed Waves with the utmost Violence, and are agitated into Foam by the strongest of all Pilots, the WIND. Thus it is when Reason does not preside at the Helm; instead of the Passions, those Elements of Life, directing and wafting us like gentle BREEZES thro' this troubled OCEAN of Life, we find nothing but Disorder and a kind of ANARCHY; where each separate Passion would direct the HUMAN BARK its own Way, without listening to the Dictates of Reason, or the pungent Gnawings of a troubled Conscience.

BESIDES, we often find that amidst the Abundance of all Things, the Heart is cloy'd with desiring, and the Senses with Gratification; and, on the contrary, we may observe, that there are others whose Desires increase with their Revenues, and, like HAMAN, their Minds are not easy or serene, but rather a jarring Scene of unharmoniz'd Passions, as long as they meet with any Obstacles to their aspiring Hopes.

HENCE it appears, that Satisfaction or Contentment is not consequent upon the Enjoyment of RICHES; and therefore we have no Reason to be proud of that, which, impartially considered, according to its real Worth, produces no solid Content. Pain, Sickness, and Death, are good CRITERIONS by which we may judge of their Worth, and discover them in any of these States as a false FRIEND in the Time of ADVERSITY; neither of them discover any Signs of Relief, but are strong convincing Arguments of Affections misplaced, and of the want of a quick Apprehension and a discerning Judgment.

THO'

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THO' we ought not to be proud of Strength, Beauty, or Riches; yet Honour, it may be imagin'd, is a good Foundation for Pride: But to *this* I shall speak, with GOD's Leave, at another Opportunity.

NOW to GOD the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST, be ascrib'd, as is most due, all Honour and Praise, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, NOW and for EVER-MORE:



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S E R M O N II.

PROV. XXX. 13.

*THERE is a GENERATION, O how lofty are
their EYES! and their EYE-LIDS are lift-
ed up.*

IN a former Discourse upon these Words, I
propos'd to consider the several CAUSES
of PRIDE, which generally excite that
hellish Passion in human Nature. These Causes
which I took Notice of, such as Strength, Beauty,
Riches, Honour, and Knowledge, are the great
Elaters of the human Mind; tho' indeed some,
to the Disgrace of Reason be it spoken, are so
lost in Sensuality, that they are proud of Vice and
Folly: And others again are so stupidly vain, and
are so little deserving of the Blessings of Health,
that

that they are proud of nothing but what is an entail'd Curse upon human Nature, *DISEASE*. If such have Reason to be proud, the *WORMS* certainly, that devour such vain corrupted Wretches, ought no longer by their creeping to shew their Humility, but erect the *HEAD*, and set up a stiff *NECK*. Others again are so humble, that they are proud of Disgrace, Contempt, and, what now-a-days passes for the greatest Contumely, and is the most detested, *POVERTY*: And others, in short, are so humble, that they are proud of a wicked *rich Man's* Company; and think so meanly of themselves, as first to get drunk, and afterwards, like *SWINE*, to wallow in the *MIRE*: And some Men are so submissive, as to think it an Honour, and are consequently proud, of being the standing Jest of Men superior to themselves either in Fortune or Preferment; and they measure their own Greatness, which is an amazing Argument of their Stupidity, according to the Ridicule with which they are receiv'd. But such Men that are thus ridiculously proud, are not worth a serious Reproof; I leave them therefore to be treated with,

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what they are so mighty fond of, RIDICULE. I shall proceed to the more natural Causes of PRIDE which remain to be consider'd, namely, HONOUR and KNOWLEDGE.

AND *first*, with respect to HONOUR, some may imagine that it is a good Foundation for Pride; because it supposes Merit in the Person honour'd; it supposes Honour to be due to personal Merit; and that Merit thus honour'd should appear something superior to the rest of Mankind: because Eminence of Station conveys to us an Idea of Grandeur, Magnificence, and Superiority.

THAT Merit should be honour'd is not the Question; but whether the Person thus honour'd upon account of his Merit should be proud of it, is the Question to be solv'd; which indeed will admit of no Dispute, if we do but consider its Uncertainty, Emptiness, and Unsatisfactoriness. HONOUR, as it consists in the Idea of Persons about us, must be very precarious. Some there are, who will not allow us any Merit; and consequently

quently will neither honour or esteem us. Others there are, who, notwithstanding we have no Merit, yet, upon account of some Advantage accruing to them from us, will both honour and esteem us. Hence then this sort of Honour is uncertain, because it depends upon the Notions of People about us; it is of a precarious Tenure, because People's Minds are changeable upon the least Hint; and, by Consequence, we are often deemed honourable or dishonourable with little or no Reason, out of Whim and Contradiction, out of Malice or Good-nature. This is the general Way of judging by the Bulk of Mankind. But if we would be proud of any sort of Honour attributed to us, we should be proud then, and only then, when the Man of true Honour, and an honest Heart, of sound Principles, and impartial Judgment, condescends to honour us with particular Marks of Esteem; then we might conclude with the MORALIST, "That it is a glorious Thing to be commended "by a Person of known Integrity." This, however, in reality, ought not to be the Occasion of Pride; but rather an Incentive to adorn our Minds with

with every Christian Virtue which would promote the Peace and Tranquility of the human Soul.

IF we consider the Honours and Titles of Men in an higher Sphere of Action, we shall see less Reason to be proud of them. When Men are in full Pursuit after them, they are charming to the Eye, and fill the Imagination with chimerical Notions of Happiness; the Prospect at a Distance is delightful, tho' the Way to them, is, like the Way to HEAVEN, narrow, rugged, intricate. They appear like a MEADOW at a Distance, nothing but one continued BED of FLOWERS; but when the Candidates for them have gain'd the Summit, they find, to their great Disappointment, the FLOWERS thin-sown, the WEEDS innumerable. Thus empty and unsatisfactory are the Honours and Titles that Men make such a Bustle about: They are like the poor MAHOMETAN's Dreams of sensual Pleasure in his future Paradise; which, if Scripture and Reason may be credited, will, in the End, like all other DREAMS, appear nothing else but mere Delusion. That Honours and
Titles

Titles are of the same unsatisfactory Nature, we are inform'd by that best of all Informers, EXPERIENCE. While Men are in quest after them, they are then thought to be great Augmentations of Happiness; not considering, that what they pursue is within themselves, in their own Power: otherwise the greatest, far the greatest Part of Mankind, that are depriv'd of Honours and Titles, would be unhappy, and live in a particular Flatness of Spirits, would be pensive, and overcome with the black Passions. We find, on the contrary, that Happiness is confin'd to no Station; if a Man will think himself happy, he is happy: it therefore consists in Opinion, is a THOUGHT, and has its Existence no-where but in the BRAIN. Those then that are content with their present Allotment assign'd them by Providence, are as happy as this present State of Things will allow them. But such as are always thirsting after something external, are unhappy: the Desire supposes a Want; and where Want is, there is a Want of Happiness. Both those then that are in quest after Honours and Titles, and those that

recede from Honours and Preferments, and find no Satisfaction in Titles, must be unhappy; because Change of Station supposes Unhappiness in the Stations from whence both Parties receded. Agreeable to this is the Opinion of the HEATHEN MORALIST, “ We seem, says he, as if “ surfeited with the Toils of STATE, and “ therefore chuse a fit Place for Contemplation; “ yet in that very Place of Retirement, where we “ thought to have met with Composure, Ambition springs up with a fresh GALE, and drives “ our shatter’d BARKS into a second OCEAN of “ Troubles.” Thus Happiness is the Growth of no particular Soil, confined to no Age or Situation in Life; ’tis every where, where there is Contentment, but never there where the Appetites are unruly, and where Cares are predominant. The still Scenes of Life bid fairest for it; and high Life is the most remarkable for the Want of it. Why then should Men pursue after that, which, in the very Pursuit, is troublesome; whose Enjoyment is unsatisfactory, and whose Conclusion is Vanity? And certainly ’tis very unbecoming a rational Be-

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ing, whose Hopes and Views are not limited by Time, but extended to Eternity, to pursue after, place his Confidence in, and be proud of Unhappiness. SOLOMON, as much as any Man living, experienced the Truth of this Observation. He gathered together every Thing that he thought would contribute to his Happiness; he became great, and increased more than any before him at JERUSALEM, and with-held not his Heart from any Joy: But what was the Result of this Enquiry? Nothing but a melancholy REFLECTION, that all was VANITY and VEXATION of SPIRIT. In the next Place he consider'd WISDOM and FOLLY, and MADNESS, and saw that Wisdom excelleth Folly, as LIGHT excelleth DARKNESS. But whether we ought to be proud of it shall be our next Enquiry.

THAT we ought not to be proud of WISDOM, the End proposed to be obtained by it is a sufficient Evidence. It has been observ'd that all our Knowledge is to know ourselves. We are to consider the different Relations we stand in to
 GOD

GOD and Mankind, our extensive Ignorance and minute Knowledge. If this be thoroughly weighed, this very Knowledge will awake the sleeping Sparks of Humanity in us, and make us think justly of GOD, meanly of ourselves, and humanely of our Fellow-Creatures. Reason was given us for wise Ends. At the same Time that it assists us in the several Necessaries and Occurrences of Life; it is a Light to guide our Steps in all moral and religious Truths. But at the same Time that it is a principal Assistant in the Attainment of Knowledge, it ought to be a Check upon us, on Supposition that we are more knowing than other Men. Letters were term'd HUMANIORES by the LATINS; because they were supposed to polish and refine Men's Manners: And the POETS supposed that Learning had the Power of humanizing Savages into Men. But 'tis strange that those, who are the most remarkable for an extensive Knowledge, should be the greatest Examples of INHUMANITY: Stranger still that those, who teach Mankind their Duty, should be the first TRANSGRESSORS of it: Strangest still that those,

those, who contradict the whole World, should not be able to bear one single Contradiction. If in common Conversation such give a full Liberty to their Tongues, Scandal flows from them in copious Streams, and, like WATER that partakes of the MINERAL thro' which it passes, always leaves a Stain behind that denotes its Impurity. Such Men have not yet attained the greatest Knowledge, the Knowledge of themselves. They have indeed the Knowledge that PUFFETH UP; which, like the PHILOSOPHY of old, is vain, empty, and engenders PRIDE.

BUT ought not the Knowledge of our excessive IGNORANCE to pull down our VANITY? Do we know certainly what passes within us; do we know ourselves? Do not we seem rather to have no Notion, if we are to be judg'd by our Actions, of our BEINGS, End, and Aim? And with respect to Things without us, can we be said to have any Knowledge to boast of? Can we comprehend their Natures, Uses, and Ends for which they were created? Do we know Causes
from

from * Effects? or can we really account for all or any Appearances of Nature? Is not rather most of what we call Knowledge of these Things founded on Conjecture? And even with relation to our Duty, do we know when VIRTUE ends and VICE begins? Are we not rather often ignorant of the Boundaries of each? And if it be admitted that we are ignorant of the most common Occurrences, why should we any longer pretend to fathom, by our finite Capacities, the Mysteries of the GOSPEL, or correct the various Dispensations of PROVIDENCE, as if we were wiser than the wise DISPOSER of all Things? This carping State of ours mostly resembles, if I may be allowed the poetical Comparison, the FLY placed upon a large TOWER; which, tho' it cannot see an Inch around it,

* There is scarce a Production in Nature, says the great Mr BOYLE, the Uses whereof to human Life are thoroughly known or understood. And in another Place he observes, that very few of Nature's Works have been sufficiently consider'd, even as to those Qualities that belong to them. There is a kind of TERRA INCOGNITA in every natural Body, reserv'd for the Discovery of Futurity.—*Vide BOYLE's Phil. Works, Vol. I.*

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it, yet it has the Impudence to condemn the Structure of the whole. So 'tis with Man placed in this Sphere of Action; he is more apt to cavil with God's Proceedings, than humbly to acquiesce in real Ignorance. The Truth is, every one would be term'd a Man of Knowledge. Hence arise Endeavours to strike out new Lights, which oftentimes, instead of serving as a CLUE to guide us out of the Laybrinths of Error, only increase the Mazes, and bewilder the Reasoning Faculty. Hence arise Cavils, Disputes, Criticisms. Authors are made to speak, by a perverse Interpretation, a Sense they never meant; and often every Error, every Folly, is to the SCRIPTURE laid. A sad Instance this, of the Ignorance or Perverseness of human Nature! A pregnant Proof of Vanity, Self-sufficiency, and Disingenuity! Such should consider, however, that then Men shew the greatest Signs of Knowledge, when they ingenuously own, that they know nothing as they ought to know. This Humility is generally the Product of great Experience, laborious Thinking, Love of Retirement, and an assiduous Application to Books; and

and no Wonder, since the Knowledge of the great Ignorance of Mankind naturally leads, or ought to lead Men, at least, to the Suspicion of their own.

BUT supposing that we do know a little, which is nothing in Comparison to what we are ignorant of, what Reason is there for us to be proud of it? If it be true, that an Increase of KNOWLEDGE is an Increase of SORROW, certainly there can be no Reason or Foundation for being proud of Knowledge. Would not every Person of Sense imagine that he, who is proud of a Disease or any Distemper, because 'tis fashionable, is a proper Object for Ridicule? And, by Parity of Reason, I think, none who have experienced that the Search after Knowledge is painful, causes a Wearisomeness of the FLESH, and damages the Organs of THINKING, will conclude that Men ought to be proud of what they know; because 'tis an Absurdity to maintain that Men ought to be proud of that which contributes largely to the Unhappiness of Life.

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THIS Pride, however, does not take its Rise from the Knowledge of our DUTY. Christianity inspires no such Meanness; HUMILITY is pre-scrib'd as the properest Dress for Man to appear in; and human Nature is the Object of universal Benevolence. If Men were not above studying the SACRED RULE of Life, we should meet with more Humility, and less Contempt; more Candour in judging; and less Rancour; more Sincerity, and less Cunning; a tenderer Regard for human Misery, and less Fondness for SELF.

BUT as long as this divine LUMINARY's forgot, neglected, despis'd, it is no Wonder that FOLLY springs up and choaks the remaining Seeds of VIRTUE. Is there a Man wise in his own CONCEIT, that boasts of his superior Knowledge, and, in consequence of that, grows supercilious? There is more Hope of a FOOL than of him. Is there a Man passionate when his Sentiments are contradicted? There is more Hope of the Conversion of an INFIDEL than of him. Is there a Man doubting of, and consequently enquiring

quiring into the Foundation of moral Obligation, whether it is placed in the Nature, Reason, or Truth, or Relation of Things, without taking into Consideration the greatest Incentive to Action, the WILL of GOD? Such a one may shew himself a proud Reasoner; but he will make us think, that he has little Reason for Action, and is not too much burthen'd with CHRISTIANITY. Such generally usher their Sentiments into the World not with too much Civility and Complaisance. Words, however, deliver'd with Modesty, Deference, and Ingenuity, best become fallible Man; whereas Words deliver'd with a scornful Tone of Voice, with a contemptible Look, and haughty Gesture, either move our Pity, Laughter, or Hatred of the ridiculous Speaker. Pride makes a Man discover his Knowledge, and consequently his Ignorance, at once; but Modesty, like the blushing ROSE, only unfolds its Beauties by Degrees, that the World might not be dazzled with all its Charms at one View.

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been look'd upon as a dangerous Thing; it is apt to intoxicate, and make the Head giddy: It is incumbent upon us therefore to drink deep, or taste not of the Fountains from whence our Knowledge flows. If we look into the World, we shall see the bad Effects of little Knowledge; we shall have a full View of CONTROVERSY, and all its noisy Attendants, Anger, Abuse, Detraction, Impertinence, Insincerity, all enlisted to fight under her Banners, and PRIDE commanding the Attack. Better would it be, if Men were ingenuous with a little Knowledge, than employ an extensive Knowledge in order to corrupt Men's Morals, or to the Prejudice of Religion: Better 'tis to know nothing, than to use a little, or an extensive Knowledge, to their eternal Ruin. FOOLS are suffer'd to speak for our Diversion and Amusement; but learned, or half-learned Fools, that misapply extraordinary or tolerable Talents, and are actuated by a bad Principle, such as Pride is, must remember, that PRIDE generally goes before a FALL; that it is contemn'd by good Men in this World; and, what is an Aggravation of it,

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it is an ABOMINATION to the great JUDGE of Heaven and Earth, both in this World and in that which is to come.

SINCE then none of the before-mentioned Arguments made Use of in the Behalf of PRIDE are significant, I shall, as I propos'd in the *second* Place, consider two particular SPECIES of Pride, and their EFFECTS, as distinguishable in human Nature.

THE first that I shall mention is PRIDE in POWER, which is of an assuming Nature, and thinks that every thing is its Due: It contemns and looks upon all Mankind as its Vassals; and consequently, if it meets with Opposition, it swells itself into a Tumor, and, like imprison'd SULPHUR and NITRE, when rarified to a great Degree, it thunders out Destruction against every thing that opposes its Course. SELF generally does, and indeed ought to mingle with all our Actions; and what has been said of that soft Passion of the human Soul, LOVE, is more applicable

cable to SELF; for it more particularly mingles with Life, and forms the very Soul. But for a Man to shew too great an Esteem for SELF, in Exclusion of all benevolent Affections towards human Nature, and all good Dispositions towards GOD, is in reality to make himself both IDOL and IDOLATER. Criminal, indeed: 'Tis to set up an Idol, in any Sense, in opposition to the true GOD; but to set up Imperfection against all possible Perfection, is to act contrary to common Sense, and the Dictates which our common Infirmities suggest to us.

THIS sort of Pride may truly be reckoned a false MIRROR: It magnifies Objects above their natural Magnitude, and makes even the Infirmities of our Nature appear as something meritorious; it gives a Gloss and false Colouring to every Action, and hinders a Man from thinking like a moral Agent, from speaking like a rational one, and from acting like a CHRISTIAN. A Man of this wrong Turn is supercilious, because vain, affected in his Discourse, and generally speaks

as if he trode in BUSKINS; because to talk otherwise would be falling from his Dignity, and a criminal Compliance with the Vulgar: He loves to see People flock to his LEVEE, because that proclaims his Greatness; and to keep them to dance Attendance a good while, before that he is pleased to favour them with an Admittance, at once demonstrates his Superiority and their Dependence.

BUT, what is worst of all, to be favour'd with a gracious SMILE, after some Years fruitless Attendance, is often look'd upon as an hopeful Reception; tho' it too often proves a pregnant Evidence of his Insincerity, and their want of Discretion.

THIS Method of acting is generally observ'd by the proud Man towards those that are not of a much inferior Rank. But if we view him in another Light, in relation to the Bulk of Mankind, we shall find him their TYRANT, not their BENEFACTOR; he considers them as made for
his

his Service, and values them only, as we do BRUTES, for their Usefulness. If they offend him, he rages; if they contradict him, he is furious, and ready to commit the greatest Violence; and, what is worst of all, he carries his Honour in the Point of his SWORD; not considering that Humility is the greatest Ornament of Greatness, and that Humanity exercis'd towards Mankind, that partake of the same common Nature, that have the same CREATOR, the same REDEEMER, and the same SANCTIFIER, join'd with the same Prospect of Happiness, is what becomes every Descendant from ADAM.

BUT if we shift the Scene, and introduce this proud Man under the Character of a FRIEND, we shall find that he is not capable of that Refinement, that Delicacy of Soul, which is necessary to the very Existence of Friendship. Can he throw off that Affectation of Superiority, which, when affected, is generally the DEATH of Friendship? Can he, in common Conversation on indifferent Matters, give Ear to a Friend's Advice? Can he
thwart

thwart his own Inclination, in order to do him a Pleasure? Can he forgo an Advantage, that he may thereby be serviceable to his Friend? Will he make his Friend's Cause his own? Will he oblige him, without telling him of the Obligation? Will he connive at his Failings, without making them the Subject of his rude Mirth, and ill-timed Ridicule? Will he comfort him in Sicknefs; or, when under the Pressure of adverse Fortune, will he support him? Nay, rather, will he not expose him to a merciless World; which will scoff at Poverty, and sneer at human Misery; whose Pity is even cruel, and whose Charity, because attended with barbarous Reflections, is almost equal to the Agonies of Death? The Truth is, the proud Man, as he would not chuse to have any upon a Level with himself, cannot have a true Friend; he may be attended with Sycophants, and such whose Interest it is to keep fair with him; he may have Vassals that will give into any criminal Compliances in Obedience to an imperious Master; but he is depriv'd of true Friends, whose Counsels are the MEDICINE of Life, whose WOUNDS are faith-

faithful, and whose AFFECTIONS are perpetual.

THE Reason is, there cannot be an Union of Souls where a Distance is kept up, and where Men endeavour to maintain an Inequality : Where there is a Distance, there is Reservedness ; where there is Reservedness, there is want of Confidence ; where there is a want of Confidence, there is a want of Sincerity : and when all, or any of these, are wanting, no real Friendship can exist.

THIS is the very Case of the proud Man : His Dependants fear him, and, perhaps, hate him ; his Equals contemn him, and, if he has Superiors, they make a Jest of him : and this too is owing to his contemptuous Behaviour, and his supposed Inequality which he affects towards other Men. Well were it for such a Man, if he were placed in such a Situation of Life where he might taste the Sweets of Friendship : He would no longer practise the forbidding Aspect, the haughty Gesture, or the civil Leer ; a gentle Softness would steal
upon

upon him unawares, and make him feel, what he never felt before, Joys at another's Prosperity, and a becoming Distress for another's Woes.

BUT the principal Reason why he is not susceptible of Friendship, is, because proud and haughty SCORNER is his Name, because he dealeth in proud WRATH. As Virtue is the BASIS or Foundation of all true Friendship, so Vice is the Death of it. Anger, proud Anger especially, is a fruitful Source of Ills; it is an Enemy to Truth, Peace, Candour, Benevolence, and, by Consequence, is a mortal Enemy to Friendship's sacred Flame. Friendship has been call'd a RELIGION that takes its Source from the first, and points, like it to HEAVEN, and almost in this Scene of Misery antedates its Bliss. Miserable then must be the Condition of this proud Man without this BALSAM of Life; because Health is reckon'd a DISEASE, Life DEATH, without the agreeable Society of a Friend.

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BUT of this, and some other Effects, I shall speak, God willing, at some other Time.

NOW to GOD the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST, be ascrib'd, as is most due, all Honour and Praise, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, NOW and for EVERMORE.



SER.



S E R M O N III.

PROV. XXX. 13.

THERE is a GENERATION, O how lofty are their EYES! and their EYE-LIDS are lifted up.

IN two former Discourses upon these Words I considered, *first*, the several Causes of Pride; which, either upon Account of their uncertain Tenure, or their Unsatisfactoriness, could not be any proper Foundation for such an Elation of Mind. In the *next* Place I proposed to treat of two particular Species of Pride, and their Effects. And, *lastly*, to conclude with an Exhortation to Humility. One Species of Pride, which is Pride in Power, and one Effect of it, namely, its being incapable of Friendship, I have already

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consider'd. I come now to consider farther this proud Man in a RELIGIOUS VIEW; and here we shall find him behaving after the same Manner to his GOD, as he did to his Neighbour. For it may be observ'd as an invariable Maxim, that a Man that has not good Principles in Morality, can never have good ones in Religion; and Religion, on the contrary, enforced by proper Sanctions, is the best Cause of good Morals. The proud Man then cannot be a good RELIGIONIST, because a bad MORALIST; and certainly, from the Contempt of his Neighbour, there is a natural and easy Transition to the Contempt of the GOD that made him: And 'tis no wonder, on the contrary, that if he despises his MAKER and PRESERVER, he, by consequence, will despise those of the same Species with himself. And if a Man will work himself up to such a Pitch of Wickedness as to think meanly of GOD's Handiworks, we may easily conclude, that whatever comes from GOD will afford Matter for Ridicule to the proud Man. To be a proud Boaster, an haughty dogmatical Dictator, a proud Reasoner,

and

PRIDE *in* HUMAN NATURE. 173

and an imperious and abusive Writer, are Ingredients which are almost, nay, I may venture to add, altogether essential to the Composition of this proud Man.

No Wonder then, that the Contempt of REVELATION is owing to PRIDE, and that for two Reasons: Either because, first, the proud Man is guilty of great Immoralities; and then 'tis no Wonder that a Religion, whose Purity forbids all Irregularities of Soul and Body, should not meet with a good Reception with one that has contracted vicious Habits; and, what is worst of all, a dishonest Heart. To submit to such a Restraint; which contradicts the immoderate Sallies of indulg'd Passions, and commands him not to set up his HORN, nor a STIFF NECK; and likewise that he should not be high-minded, but fear; shews, as he erroneously thinks, an abject Meanness of Soul: not considering, that to act viciously, is to act meanly; and to contemn what GOD has given us for a RULE of Life, is to set up Weakness in opposition to OMNIPOTENCE,

and

174 *The CAUSES and EFFECTS of*
and human Folly in contradiction to infinite
WISDOM. Or,

Secondly, THIS proud Man despises Revelation, because he thinks Reason is able to bring him to Happiness. Now, if we consider the Strength of human Reason since the Fall of Man, we shall find it a bad PILOT; Heathen Ignorance, Heathen Superstition, and Heathen Follies, are a demonstrative Evidence of its profound Darknes: and if it was not sufficient to direct them to an happy Immortality, how should it direct us, since all are not * Philosophers, to the glorious Mansions of the JUST? and if it does but see thro' a GLASS darkly, even when illuminated by Revelation, certainly when unassisted it must be only the Glimmering of Light, and must resemble the LIGHTENING; which, as it pierces thro' a dense dark CLOUD, only serves to make the Darknes visible, and

* 'Tis allowed by all, that if Man does but act up to REASON, supposing no REVELATION from GOD to exist, he will finally obtain Mercy. This is the Opinion of the LEARNED concerning the Heathen World.

and the Horror of it more horrible. Thus Reason, at the same Time that it affords the Understanding a little Light, evidences likewise its want of it. Can we then be proud of this boasted Reason, which is Darkneſs, when compared to the Light of the G O S P E L ? Or, is it not reaſonable that it ſubmit to that which G O D has declared, by S I G N S and W O N D E R S, to be his W I L L ? Does it not daily prove its own Weakneſs, and the Darkneſs that it is involv'd in, by a thouſand Inſtances ? Is it not daily overturning old H Y P O T H E S E S, and framing new ones ? Is it not often loſt in Doubt and Conjecture ? And has not D O U B T I N G been a Science ? What has Reason then in it, that we ſhould admire it to our Deſtruction ? Is not thus to admire it, like preferring a T A P E R to the Light of the S U N ? Such a Preference brings the romantick D U N G E O N into our View, in the Middle of which is a Taper burning, which only diſcovers the gloomy Horror of the Place, and the Confuſion and indiſtinct Appearance of Objects : Or rather, it reſembles the poetical D E S C E N T into the infernal R E G I O N S ;
where

174 *The CAUSES and EFFECTS of*
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and the Horror of it more horrible. Thus Reason, at the same Time that it affords the Understanding a little Light, evidences likewise its want of it. Can we then be proud of this boasted Reason, which is Darknefs, when compared to the Light of the GOSPEL? Or, is it not reasonable that it submit to that which GOD has declared, by SIGNS and WONDERS, to be his WILL? Does it not daily prove its own Weakness, and the Darknefs that it is involv'd in, by a thousand Instances? Is it not daily overturning old HYPOTHESES, and framing new ones? Is it not often lost in Doubt and Conjecture? And has not DOUBTING been a Science? What has Reason then in it, that we should admire it to our Destruction? Is not thus to admire it, like preferring a TAPER to the Light of the SUN? Such a Preference brings the romantick DUNGEON into our View, in the Middle of which is a Taper burning, which only discovers the gloomy Horror of the Place, and the Confusion and indistinct Appearance of Objects: Or rather, it resembles the poetical DESCENT into the infernal REGIONS; where

where the Ghosts, Spectres, Gorgons, Hydras, and Chimeras, glide along just discernible; the pitchy Darkness, interspersed with faint Rays of Light, adds Horror to the Scene, by making, if I may be allow'd the Expression, the Darkness visible. Thus is Reason: It consists of Light and Shade; but its shadowy Parts, like those of a melancholy Representation, are predominant: it sees indistinctly, apprehends slowly, and, for the most part, judges erroneously. To ascribe then too much to Reason, in Disparagement of Revelation, not only discovers Pride, but demonstrates likewise the Perverseness, as well as Ignorance, of human Nature. And certainly to glory in that, whose Imperfections the Writings of all Ages fully evince, shews, that one cannot boast of Weakness and Infirmities without incurring the Censure of having a weak Understanding. One might imagine, that Reason would mortify our Pride; since all the Errors, all the Follies, committed either in Thought or Action, may be attributed to Reason: So true is the Observation of the SCHOOLMEN, That the

Act of the UNDERSTANDING preceeds that of the WILL.

THESE are the common Effects of Pride in one sort of Men: But if we take a View of another sort and its Effects, which I proposed to treat of, we shall find it the Reverse of the former. This is with great Propriety term'd PRIDE that will LICK the DUST: that is, it will submit to a mean unbecoming Behaviour, so that it may, by that Means, raise itself to a greater Height. It can be supple and cringing to any that can do it a Service; but, when the Service is done, it can as readily disavow it: It can appear in any Shape, and become all Things to all Men, that it may gain some to its Interest: It can, like that cunning greedy Animal, the HYENA, when it wants to make a Prey, feign the distress'd Tone of Voice by way of Decoy. It appears under the Mask of Friendship, and discovers itself in gentle Smiles, obliging Gestures, and complaisant Professions of good Offices. Thus the gilded Pill of Insinuation goes smoothly down, and proves in the End rank Poi-

son to those that are so unfortunate as to swallow it : For 'tis certainly true that those who are so weak as to suffer themselves thus to be imposed upon, are generally contemn'd and ridicul'd by the very Persons that made Use of them as the Instruments of their Ambition. And when we have a full View of such Persons in Power, and see them arriv'd at the Height of their most sanguine Hopes, we cannot help comparing them to gaudy BUTTERFLIES, that undergo several Changes of their Condition before they appear in their variegated Plumage ; and as the Progress of the latter thro' their several States, before they arrive at any tolerable State of Perfection, is abject and grovelling : so, those mean Candidates for Honour and Preferment ascend Step by Step thro' a tedious Chain of Meannesses ; and before they can be Men in Power, they must be the Tools and Instruments of Ambition ; and oftentimes to be thorough-paced VILLAINS is the only Recommendation for them to a POST of HONOUR. Thus mean Condescensions and criminal Compliances are made, that Men may gain the highest Spoke in the WHEEL of FORTUNE :

not considering that such an Eminence requires a sound Head, and a particular Firmness of Soul; otherwise a Giddiness may seize them, and tumble them to the lowest Spoke, to their own Confusion, nay, perhaps Destruction, and Joy of the gazing Multitude.

BUT this sort of PRIDE is oftentimes more eminently criminal than the former, because 'tis particularly guilty of that foul Crime of INGRATITUDE. It wears a MASK, till it has gain'd the full Completion of its Desires; but when that is once gain'd, it no longer appears under a borrow'd Shape, but shifts the Scene, and re-assumes the true Character. Hence is it that Riches and Power are said to discover the MAN: then he is at Liberty to act as Inclination dictates; whereas before, Narrowness of Circumstances, and a contracted Sphere of Action, were terrible Obstacles in the Ways of Vice. Experience confirms this. If we take a View of Mankind, the younger Part especially, that abound in Riches, we shall see them, not like EPICURUS, given to a con-
tem-

templative Life; but, like his FOLLOWERS, immers'd in Voluptuousness, sunk in Pleasure, and swimming down the Current of Inclination. If then you would know Mankind, grant them the full Extent of their Wishes, and then you will see a new sort of Inclinations in the Bud, and gradually branching themselves out to an immoderate Height, unless timely check'd in their Growth by Discretion. So true is the Observation, that the Vices of a great many are not of an enormous Size, because they occupy but a low Station in Life. Something similar to this is produced in the SERPENT: Winter congeals its Poison, and hinders its malign Influences; but, when the Summer appears, it dissolves the Poison, and makes it pernicious in its Operations. No Wonder then that Pride is the Spawn of Riches and Power, and that Ingratitude takes its Rise from Pride; since it thinks it demeans itself prettily, if it pays or owns an Obligation, especially to Persons of no Figure. It thinks its eminent Station a sufficient Security against Insult, and that its Riches can ward off any Blow that is aim'd at it on account of its Ingratitude.

titude. Hence this Vice is the Child of Pride, and
 nurs'd by Riches. Both of them are to the
 MIND, what VERNAL SHOWERS are to the
 EARTH; each contributes to the Nourishment of
 its respective Plants; and at the same Time that
 some of a good Quality thrive, others either un-
 profitable, or of a noxious Nature, swell into an
 immoderate Size: and it is not surprizing if Ingra-
 titude shoots up its Head in a luxuriant Soil, when
 foster'd by a genial Warmth. And if it does
 spring up, as Experience shews it too often does,
 it proves the most detestable of all Vices; because
 to it, as to one common Centre, the other Vices
 incline: but, more particularly, Breach of Faith,
 Breach of Friendship, Injustice, Oppression, and,
 what is worst of all, Murder oft concludes the black
 Catalogue, and shuts the dismal Scene. Since
 there is such a Connection in Vice, and more emi-
 nently in this, 'tis no Wonder that the AN-
 CIENTS honour'd Ingratitude with a particular
 Mark of Distinction, to denote at the same Time
 the unnatural Offence, and also their Abhorrence
 of it.

BUT

BUT Ingratitude is not the only Vice that attends this sort of Pride. IMPUDENCE, with its HANDMAIDS, Intemperance and Unclean-ness, are generally Attendants upon it. For Pride in Power cannot brook a Contradiction to its Inclinations ; if it should, it would argue want of Power to compass what Inclination prompted to : not considering, that a bad Inclination thwarted, tends toward the Conquest of ourselves ; than which nothing is so difficult, and at the same Time so honourable. But this sort of Pride generally behaves with the same inherent Meanness when in Power, as when in its Rise ; and if it could put off all Modesty in its Dawnings of Power, it is not strange if it displays itself in Scenes of Lewdness, when Power is added to Inclination.

AND as this sort of Pride is ungrateful and debauch'd in its Practice, so is it envious at another's Success. Superior Merit either in Action or Conduct, superior Fortune, or superior Titles, or a Prince's Favour, are sufficient Motives to Envy. The Desire of raising himself to the State of Su-

periority, without sufficient Abilities to enable him to do it, is the very Cause of an envious Man; and the very Knowledge of another's larger Talents, is oft the Object of Envy; because sometimes from Superiority of Abilities, one may, with some Degree of Certainty, predict another's future Eminence in Life. This perhaps might be MORDECAI's Case; otherwise what Reason had HAMAN to be discompos'd at the Behaviour of a Man so much beneath him. The Reason indeed is said to be this: MORDECAI would not pay him a proper Deference; he neither stood up, nor moved for him; therefore was he under HAMAN's great Displeasure: and tho' HAMAN enjoyed the greatest Honours, the greatest Riches, and was bless'd with a Multitude of Children, yet, continued he, all these avail me nothing so long as I see MORDECAI sitting in the King's Gate. Besides the Contempt shewn by this JEW to the King's Prime Minister, there must be some other Reason why this proud Man could not bear a Sight of MORDECAI; he hated him probably for his open Contempt, envy'd him by reason of his Relation

to

to the Queen, and because he seem'd to have Qualifications sufficient to enable him to supplant HAMAN in the Royal Favour. If this was not the Case, why was *Haman's* Wrath so violent, as not only to thirst after the Blood of MORDECAI, but likewise the Blood of all the JEWS? A little Contempt, one would imagine, could not do all this; I should rather suppose this proud Man painted his own Downfal, and the Rise of MORDECAI, in his Imagination: This melancholy Consideration might make him envious; Envy would naturally make him hate; and Hatred might hurry him on to desire the utter Extirpation of the JEWS. Not so the generous SPARTAN; he was glad to know that there were brave Men in the City besides himself. Great and good Men have a benevolent Disposition; and as they are good themselves, they love to see it in others, and are ready to forward others too in their several prosperous Pursuits in Life. Whereas Envy is a bitter Enemy to another's Fame; and as in NATURAL BODIES there is required a Fitness to reflect the Rays of Light; so in the HUMAN SOUL

SOUL it is requisite that there should be a fit Disposition to receive the Brightness of another's Fame; otherwise it will be susceptible of that odious Passion, Envy, which generally throws a Shade over the bright Parts of another's Character, like OPAQUE BODIES that suffocate the Rays of LIGHT; and as every SHADOW owes it Birth to Light, so Fame, true Fame especially, produces Calumny and Censure.

BESIDES the before-mentioned Effects, I might here mention, that Pride is often the Cause of INFIDELITY; because first Pride occasions an Affectation of Singularity, which is wont to take much with such Persons as desire to be distinguish'd by being thought to have a greater Share of Penetration than other Men.

AND, secondly, because it raises a Desire of being independent and uncontroulable by any one. When this meets with Persons of an imperious Temper, as all proud Men generally are of such a Temper, it is a strong Temptation to Scepticism

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and Infidelity. But as this would carry me beyond my present Purpose, I shall, as I proposed in the *last* Place, conclude with a short Exhortation to HUMILITY.

WHEN I recommend this Virtue to the World, I would not be so understood as to recommend all kinds of Humility. There are two sorts, of a degenerate Nature. The *first* respects our Behaviour to Man; to whom we may attribute too much, and too little to ourselves. This may be of dangerous Consequence to our Integrity; because, if we suffer ourselves to be directed entirely by others, we may often meet with ill Advisers, and consequently with ill Advice. If, in religious Matters, especially where Reason may be safely appeal'd to, we will not make Use of our own Reason, but the Reason of others, 'tis no Wonder that some amongst us make SHIPWRECK of their FAITH, and deny even the LORD that bought them. For the thinking too little, as well as too much of human Reason, is equally dangerous, and opens

a wide Gap to Errors both of Principle and Practice.

THE *second* respects the great Author of our Being, whom some have painted as enthron'd in terrible Majesty and Splendor, not to be approach'd in Prayer by any Mortal; and since he is not immediately to be apply'd to, Intercessors have been invented that should convey their Petitions to the Throne of GRACE. This is degenerating into HEATHENISM, and is an Introduction of a Plurality of Gods; because, to apply the Attributes of GOD to Creatures, is to make Gods of those Creatures; and consequently is both robbing GOD of his Honour, and likewise making his Workmanship upon a Level with him. This Behaviour is particularly inveigh'd against by St PAUL, when he says, "Let no Man beguile you of your Reward by a voluntary HUMILITY, and worshipping of ANGELS." This Command of the APOSTLE is confirm'd by Reason; because it is absurd to offer up Prayers to Beings of a limited Nature, who can be suppos'd neither omni-

nipre-

nipresent nor omniscient, and therefore cannot be the proper Objects of our Addresses.

TRUE Humility then is of a different Nature from the beforementioned sorts ; it relates to GOD and our NEIGHBOUR. That which relates to GOD consists in a due Sense of our own Meanness and his Excellency ; which produces in us a lowly and unfeigned Submission to his Will : And that which has reference to our Neighbour, consists both in having a mean and low Opinion of ourselves, and also in being content that others should have so of us : The first of these is contrary to Pride, the other to Vain-glory, which is always an Attendant upon Pride. As the Practice of this Virtue contributes greatly to our present as well as future Happiness ; as it comes strongly recommended to us by the Doctrine and Example of the BLESSED JESUS, who was meek and lowly of Heart, why should it be any longer thought a Meanness to behave with Humility ? Dare the proud and haughty SCORNER say that 'tis MEAN to imitate a GOD ? So much every proud Man

avows

avows that will not follow the great Pattern of Humility propos'd in the GOSPEL. Such declare themselves not only the Enemies of GOD, but likewise of Mankind; because no human Society can subsist happily without Humility; and because this eminent Virtue is the very Basis and Support of all as well social as religious Virtues.

WHOEVER is humble, is likewise meek, is benevolent, is beneficent; his Years pass on with Pleasure, and fly softly away; being accompanied with the kind Wishes of his Fellow Creatures, and the pleasing Consciousness of a well-spent Life. These serve both for Ballast and a pleasing Gale, to waft the HUMAN BARK safe through the Storms of Time, till it arrives at the STILL Ocean of Eternity; where SAINTS and ANGELS are ready to HAIL him welcome to the happy and eternal Shore.

WHEREAS Pride is accompanied with Shame and Contempt in this gloomy and melancholy State of Things; and when it has pass'd the Confines of
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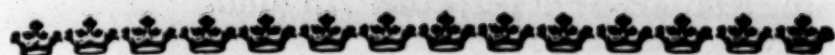
this World, it must be consign'd over to those unhappy and dismal Mansions, where the PROUD Contemners of Heaven, the Devil and his impious Adherers, reside in perpetual Anguish.

WHICH, that all of us may avoid, may God of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.

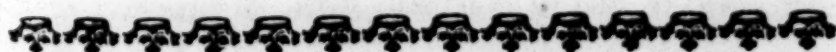


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C A N D O U R
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M I L D H U M A N I T Y
R E C O M M E N D E D.
A S E R M O N.





CANDOR

AND



MILDHUM

RECOMMENDED.

A SERMON





A

S E R M O N,

GALAT. vi. 1.

BRETHREN, *if a Man be overtaken in a FAULT,*
ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the
Spirit of MEEKNESS; considering thyself lest
THOU also be tempted.

THE great Virtue so much talk'd of,
and so little practis'd in the World, is
CHARITY. Every one can reflect on
his Neighbour for the Want of it; but when he is
to speak charitably himself of his Fellow-Creatures,
and to make Allowances for their several Failures
in Duty, he forgets not only that he is a Man, but
that he has, like other Men, the Principles of

CORRUPTION strongly interwoven with his very Nature. Why Men are thus uncharitable, two Reasons may be particularly assign'd. PRIDE occasions it in some, and Consciouſness of GUILT in others. When the proud Man asperſes his Neighbour, it is ſuppoſed that he is innocent himſelf of the Crime with which he charges another, and conſequently this Diſpraiſe is a tacit Commendation of himſelf. None, he thinks, behaves with that ſtrict Honour, Juſtice and Integrity, in the Cauſe of Truth, or with greater Piety towards GOD. But he ought to conſider, that if he wants CHARITY, which neither envieth, thinketh ill, or is puffed up, he is as ſounding BRASS, or as a tinkling Symbol: Each of which is a ſufficient Emblem of the proud Man; whoſe beſt Works, becauſe tinctur'd with bad Principles, are lighter than VANITY: And as SOUND ſuppoſes Emptineſs in the SOUNDING INSTRUMENT; ſo a carping cenſorious Temper ſuppoſes a Want of that Charity which is never uneaſy at another's Good: It ſuppoſes a want of Humanity and Fellow-feeling for thoſe that partake of the ſame common

mon Nature, and a Forgetfulness that he is surrounded with the same Temptations, and liable to Error and Misconduct by the importunate Impulses of the same deprav'd Nature. If the proud Man would look into his own, instead of his Neighbour's Breast, and there probe with the SWORD of the SPIRIT into every Wound that SIN has made; if he would not shrink at the Scrutiny, but examine to the Bottom of every SORE with Impartiality, he would find so much Need of his healing Art in his own corrupted SELF, as would hinder him from either wounding the Reputation, or making wider Orifices in those already wounded. This would learn the proud Man Humility, instead of an over-weaning Opinion of himself; and, instead of Cenforiousness, a Fear of committing the like Offences with other Men.

BUT tho' Pride is often the Cause of Uncharitableness, yet the Consciousness of GUILT is generally the greatest Cause of the Want of Charity. Guilt is of a sociable Nature; it loves Company, tho' not perhaps to evidence its Crimes, yet
to

to give a Countenance to its criminal Behaviour. None would stand alone, or be the BUTT or Talk of a Multitude, especially in Things of a shameful Tendency. But when a Number of Men practise the same Enormities, they make Vice fashionable, and therefore lessen, in some Measure, in the Eye of the World, the Evil, and consequently the Shamefulness of Sin. For this Reason it is why we are commanded in SCRIPTURE not to follow a Multitude to SIN. We too naturally conclude, when the generality of Mankind are unanimous in the Practice of any one Thing, tho' morally bad, that it is not so evil as represented, otherwise such Numbers of Men would not unite in the Practice of it. Hence 'tis that such a general Practice, if coinciding with the natural Bent of their Tempers, is a great Inducement for others to swim down the same Stream of Inclination, and to act as if there were no superintending Observer of their Actions. This Society, this Partnership in Wickedness, being such an Alleviation of a Crime, at least in the Eye of the wrong-judging World, it is no Wonder that we find Persons of
bad

bad Conduct prattling about the Malpractices of others. They have, no doubt, some End to be serv'd by it; and this certainly is the very End they would serve by their Uncharitableness. They would chuse to have others guilty, at least supposed guilty, of the like Meannesses with themselves. To be the only Persons guilty of Irregularities would be too scandalous to be endured with any tolerable Assurance. They would be then look'd upon as Enemies to Society, and Men would avoid them for fear of catching the Infection; and at the same Time that they would be the Objects of Pity, they would likewise be the Objects of Contempt. But, as I before observed, as Society in Wickedness, in some Measure, tho' unjustly, palliates the Commission of it, hence arises that grand Motive to Uncharitableness. Men that are vicious would have others practise the like Vices; and when they see others fall away from the peaceable Paths of Wisdom, they immediately conceive an inhuman hellish Joy, and, like DEATH in MILTON, grin horribly a ghastly Smile.

SINCE

SINCE the ANGELS in Heaven are said to express a particular Satisfaction for the Recovery of ONE Sinner from the Error of his Way, tho' these happy Beings are 'exempted from the Infirmities common to human Nature, we certainly, who are Sharers of the same Nature; and liable upon account of that Nature to err, should have a mutual Compassion, and consequently should mutually connive at each others Failures. And those that are so unhappy as to fall away in the Hour of Trial, we that stand firm in the Cause of Virtue should endeavour to restore in the Spirit of Meekness, lest we also be tempted, and after Temptation fall; and then our Circumstances would need the same compassionate Allowances, which we had formerly shewn towards our erring FELLOW-WARRIORS.

To such a Behaviour, tho' those that are SPIRITUAL are particularly oblig'd, yet 'tis incumbent upon the LAITY, as well as the Ministers of the Gospel, to exhibit the same Lenity, Meekness, and Compassion, towards their offending BRE-

THRENS;

HUMANITY RECOMMENDED. 199

THREN; because, as they are Men, they may err, and consequently may stand in need of the same Indulgence with those towards whom they have extended their Mercy.

THE Text indeed points out to us the particular Duty of every Minister of the GOSPEL; but as the great Law of CHARITY ought to be practised by all, none excepted, I shall consider, in this enlarged Sense,

I. THAT every one ought to seek not only his OWN, but his NEIGHBOUR's Good: And,

II. THAT we never shew a greater Regard for our NEIGHBOUR's Welfare, than when we endeavour to restore him to a State of GRACE, when he has been overtaken in a FAULT: And,

III. WE ought to do this, because all of us may stand in need, some Time or other, of the like CHARITY.

I. THEN I am to shew, that every one ought to seek not only his own, but his NEIGHBOUR's Good: And this will best appear from the Consideration of our DEPENDENCE upon one another. Mutual Wants always suppose mutual Assistance. One Man's Deficiency should be assisted by another Man's Abundance, whether it respects the Body or the Mind. If a Man has a plentiful Fortune he ought to consider it as a Treasure with which he is intrusted, in order to supply the Wants of his Fellow-Creatures. Or, if he has Wisdom, he may easily imagine, it was given him to serve him for some good End; and no better End can be assign'd, than the promoting the Good of Society. Wisdom, indeed, is naturally of a communicative Nature, and extends its benign Influence, like its great Author, GOD ALMIGHTY, to all around it. The Bad, as well as the Good, find its beneficial Effects, both with regard to their temporal and eternal Interest. But as their temporal bears no Proportion to their future Interest, 'tis the Business of a wise Man to let the LIGHT that he is possessed of shine for the Benefit

nefit of his FELLOW-TRAVELLERS, left they, having their Underftandings darken'd by the Mifts of Paſſion, might loſe the Way that leads to Happineſs. Thus the Ignorance of one Man demands the Aid of another's ſuperior Wiſdom; and it is an Injuſtice to deny to him that wants this neceſſary Aid, becauſe we are commanded, if we have Wiſdom, not to have it to ourſelves. And the very Notion of its being communicated to us by the FATHER OF LIGHTS, ſuppoſes that we ought to imitate the bright Author of it: And the communicating it in greater Proportion to one than another, ſuppoſes likewise, that thoſe who have it in greater Abundance, ſhould make up the Deficiencies by a proper Communication. Neither can we evidence a more grateful Return for this Bleſſing of Wiſdom, nor greater Wiſdom in ourſelves, than by employing it in the Service of Virtue and Religion.

BUT our Obligation to conſult our NEIGHBOUR'S GOOD, will ſtill be more evident, if we conſider that we all partake of one common Na-

ture. The being subject to the like Infirmities demands a similar Sympathy of Affection: And this very Sympathy, this rejoicing with those that do rejoice, and grieving with those that grieve, is surely a strong Argument for the doing our Neighbour all possible Good; and if it was not given for this End in several Cases, it would occasion our Unhappiness. This Sympathy, which prevails more strongly in some Constitutions than others, makes us uneasy, and consequently unhappy at the Sight of some particular Objects; and this Uneasiness often continues upon the Removal of the Objects, and never deserts us, till it has strongly impell'd us to relieve their Misery, and place them in a more happy Condition. If indeed there was not this Impulse, this strong Propensity in our Natures, many would be forgetful of the Relations that subsist between them and their Fellow-Creatures. And notwithstanding this inherent Monitor, we too often find by Experience, that some are of such harden'd Dispositions, that neither the Ties of Humanity, Affinity, or Religion, will incline them to Acts of Kindness, or
even

even to shew that, which will cost them nothing,
BENEVOLENCE.

THE Behaviour of some, however, towards their Fellow-Creatures, ought not to encourage us in the like Cruelty. As we have the same Infirmities of Nature, these very Infirmities should teach us Compassion. But this charitable Indulgence ought no otherwise to be extended to flagrant Workers of Iniquity, than by Endeavours first by gentle Means to recall them from the broad Path that leads to Destruction; and in the next Place, if these LENITIVES fail, CORROSIVES ought to be applied, in order to correct in Time the Grossness of their Humours, and the Corruption of their Habits; lest others should catch the Infection, and be carried, by the Violence of its Stream, into the Ocean of ETERNITY.

To form Excuses for such, and to colour over their Behaviour with artful Glosses, would not be CHARITY, but an evident Demonstration of our own latent Corruptions. It would be inhuman to
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palliate them, and prove that we have no Regard either for the present or future Well-being of such Offenders. Interest, indeed, that Director of the human Affections, is too often in these Days the grand Obstacle to the Performance of this charitable Duty. It is the grand Motive to a false Complaisance, lying FACE, smooth TONGUE, and supple KNEE; all which are used at the Expence of Truth, Sincerity, and every thing laudable. To tell a Man his Crimes, even with the most compassionate Tendernefs, generally is attended with the Criminal's Enmity and Aversion. And even to speak Truth in indifferent Matters to some, is the direct Way to kindle the latent Sparks of Anger, and blow it into Flame. But, in either of these Cases, is the Exercise of the great Law of CHARITY, or the Defence of Truth to be neglected, because some have neither the Virtue nor good Sense to hear either the one or the other with Patience? Certainly we should pay a greater Deference to Reason, Religion, and the Dignity of our own Natures, than to see UNGODLINESS deluging the Earth, without endeavouring

ing to impede its Progress, or without attempting to dry up such Overflowings; that will, if permitted to spread, affect both the present and future Health of Society. To feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to direct the wandering bewilder'd Traveller into the Way that leads to the Haven where he would be, are look'd upon as Actions truly charitable. And as the promoting of the temporal Interest of our Fellow-Workers is deem'd an Act of Charity; so, by Parity of Reason, the assisting of our Fellow-Travellers to the obtaining an higher Good, eternal in the Heavens, must be proportionably a greater Act of Charity; and consequently the Obligation to the Performance of it must likewise be greater, more weighty, and therefore the Neglect of it the more criminal. But this Charity ought to be exhibited to our Neighbour; because,

II. WE never shew a greater Regard for our NEIGHBOUR'S WELFARE, than when we endeavour to restore him to a State of GRACE, when he has been overtaken in a FAULT. And this

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Regard we may shew in two respects, both with relation to his Principles and Practice. When the Heart, from whence proceed the Issues of Life or Death, is corrupted, the Stream that flows from it must be consequently impure. The Fountain then must be purified and refin'd before it can produce salutary Streams; the noxious Qualities which it has contracted, either upon account of its Stagnation, or by reason of its having receiv'd unwholsome Particles from other Bodies, must be purged away, and then it will satisfy the thirsty Soul with Good. As the Heart then may be considered as a Fountain, where the first Principles of Action lye conceal'd; and as, according to the Goodness or Badness of those Principles, Men proceed to act well or ill: so a strict Guard should be set over the Heart, lest it should form Schemes both detrimental to itself and Society. And as generally we keep a watchful Eye over a Man that has once deceiv'd us, let his future Professions of Honour be what they will; so likewise, as the Heart often deceives us, and has been pronounc'd, by one that knew what was in it, that it is deceitful

ful above all Things, we ought so to attend its inward Workings, as to make it produce something that may advance both our present and future Health. Great Care then ought to be taken when the Heart is young and tender, and therefore susceptible of any Impression, to stamp only such Images upon it as will excite not only agreeable, but beneficial Sensations. When thus the pleasant and profitable are so beautifully united, we may naturally expect a glorious Harvest of corresponding good Actions. But first every one ought to encourage none but good Dispositions in his Breast; otherwise, like the deaf ADDER, he will not hear the Voice of the CHARMER, charm she never so wisely. The Instructor that endeavours to sow the SEEDS, the first Principles of Goodness in the Hearts of his Hearers, meets with but very indifferent Success, when either the Ears of his Audience are not dispos'd to hear, or when the Devil has sown TARES beforehand in their Hearts.

INSTRUCTION, however, is never more seasonable than when the Heart is thus corrupted.

Bad

Bad Principles ought to be check'd in their Growth, or they will be too luxuriant ever to be entirely eradicated. And if Men will not check them themselves, 'tis Charity in another to admonish them of their Danger, and shew them the Precipice from whence, if such Principles spring forth into a continued Series of vicious Actions, they must unavoidably fall. This is snatching a Man out of the Fire, and placing him in a State of Safety; where he will meet with no Disturbance from Conscience, or any Uneasiness from the Destruction of bad Principles.

AND as it is charitable in a PHYSICIAN to prescribe to a Neighbour that has the Seeds of a dangerous Disease latent in his Body, which would, if not timely prevented, have been fatal to him; so, by checking bad Principles by Doctrines which are entirely calculated for the Health of the Soul, we perform a Charity truly christian. And as the Charity in a PHYSICIAN is still greater when he extend his Care to a Fellow-Creature, when the Disease threatens the Dissolution of Soul and Body;

so likewise is our Charity proportionably greater, when we restore a Man to a State of GRACE from a total Depravation of Mind, and a consequent Commission of Wickedness with Greediness. 'Tis justly reckon'd a charitable Action to deliver a Man, whose Life and Goods were in Danger, from ROBBERS, or from the grinding Oppression of Men of superior Fortune: As the Charity is great in this Case, so likewise it is greater to be freed from that most cruel and tyrannical of all Enemies, SIN. It robs us of our present Peace, and makes us forfeit our future Expectation in the Mansions of the JUST. For it is impossible that we should, if we practise every thing but what is commanded in the GOSPEL, be ever at Peace with ourselves; and if we are not at Peace in our own Breasts, how is it possible for us to be at Peace with our CREATOR? This Consciousness of Guilt, amidst the greatest Affluence, makes the Heart sad; Wine cannot entirely overcome it, nor Company divert it. And to hear others prais'd for Excellencies, which we are conscious we have not, is a great Mortification: 'Tis a tacit

Admonition, that we should fill up the Blanks we have made in Life with a steady active Virtue, and eradicate those great Destroyers of our's and our Neighbour's Peace, the SEEDS of VICE.

AND if any one who feels our Pain arising from the Practice of Guilt, should charitably interpose, and should mediate Peace between us and Heaven; such Kindness would demonstrate both his HUMANITY and also his CHRISTIANITY. But charitable Advice is too often rejected with Disdain; either because the Adviser is generally look'd upon as superior, at least in Wisdom, to the Person advis'd; or, because the Manner in which the Advice is convey'd to us is disagreeable. In the former of these Cases, when Men think it a Discredit to their Understandings to be instructed, as too many are over-wise in their own Conceits, there seems to be no better Method used, in order to bring such to their right Minds, than by seeming to allow them SENSE; and then, in all probability, they would admit Truths to descend into their Hearts, which, if deliver'd in an authoritative

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Manner, might have displeased. To dictate therefore to others magisterially is the Way to raise their Aversion ; and consequently will make them rather dispute the Truth of what we say, than humbly acknowledge the Justness of our Sentiments. But to use the Spirit of Meekness, and to shew at the same Time that we are interested in the Behaviour of Offenders, and that we cannot see them act counter to their present and future Interest without the greatest Concern, is such a melting, such an irresistible Charm, that it dissolves the obstinate harden'd Offenders into a tender Concern, at least for a Time, for their miserable Circumstances. Some indeed are not to be wrought upon but by Severity : A candid compassionate Rebuke only paves the Way for a ridiculous Jest ; or makes them shew, what is a Scandal to a rational Being, an heedless Unconcernedness. For this Reason we ought to deal with them as with NATURAL BODIES : Those of a soft Composition, and less firm Texture, we generally dissolve by a smooth, yet subtle penetrating FLUID ; but those, whose

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Solidity resists the Application of Fluids, we generally resolve by that most subtle of all Elements, FIRE. We thus ought to behave towards Men. Those that offend out of Frailty, Ignorance, or not maliciously, should meet with gentle, humane Treatment from us ; and we should study like every good PHYSICIAN, the proper Temperament of each PATIENT, otherwise we cannot prescribe a Remedy any way salutary to them.

BUT the Spirit of MEEKNESS, generally speaking, is the properest Means for recovering of Offenders from a State of Sin, and we are under an Obligation to use it ; because,

III. and *lastly*, ALL of us may, some Time or other, stand in need of the like charitable Behaviour. As we are all frail by Nature, and have the SEEDS of CORRUPTION born with us, it is no Wonder that those Seeds, considering that the best of us are not always upon our Guard, spring into Action. And if we observe farther, that Ob-
jects

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jects are to these Seeds implanted in the Mind, what HEAT is to GRAIN sown in the Earth; where in each Case the Seeds are invigorated with Life, and produce Fruit in proportion to the Strength or Weakness of their respective Causes; we may from thence conclude, that, considering the evil Tendency, or the real or supposed Charms of surrounding Objects, we may ALL easily fall from our Integrity. The Command given to those who stand, that is, who still combat Sin, and are active in the Cause of Virtue, that they take HEED lest they FALL, supposes not only a Possibility, but a Probability, that the best Men may yield to the swelling Tide of some predominant Affection, and commit the Sin which most easily BESETS them. As Men are thus liable to give way to the Deceitfulness of Sin, such Proneness to it should teach us CANDOUR towards others, and should incite us to set a Guard over our own Hearts. To rebuke Offenders with a dogmatical haughty Tone of Voice, abusive Language, or, what is least becoming fallible Man, SWEARING,

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supposes that such Censurers partake not of Humanity, or that they are placed in such a secure Situation, that they can never deviate from the Paths of Wisdom. As a perfect unfinning Obedience cannot be expected from any; so no Man, for that Reason, ought to act inhumanly towards those who actually fall away in the Day of Temptation. And suppose Men were entirely perfect that rebuke others, yet their Perfection would not justify proud Wrath towards others. The Persons thus treated might imagine, that they are treated roughly; not so much because they have been guilty of Breaches in their Conduct, but because those who severely reflect upon them satisfy thereby a peevish Moroseness of Temper; or would shew, what is distasteful and odious to every one, SUPERIORITY.

OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR, in this Case, is a noble Pattern for our Imitation. Tho' he himself was entirely exempted from Imperfections necessarily attending other Men; yet HE, who judged not according to Man's Judgment, nor acted
after

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after the same partial selfish Manner, behaved with the utmost Candour, Tenderneſs, Benevolence. Offenders of all kinds HE received into Favour with the greateſt Meekneſs; and 'tis no Wonder that thoſe that laboured and were heavy laden, and whoſe Spirits were wounded by the Conſciouſneſs of Sin, applied to the SON of RIGHTEOUSNESS, ſince HE deſcended from the FATHER of LIGHTS with HEALING in his WINGS.

As HE knew what was in Man, HE knew how to induce him to enter into HIS Service, and make him fight manfully under HIS Banners. HE, in order the more effectually to advance the preſent as well as future Peace of Offenders, gave them the moſt engaging Invitations. If they would only believe in HIM, and live agreeable to that Belief, HE told them, that not only Remiſſion of Sins, but an Inheritance in Heaven, would be the happy Conſequence of ſuch a Faith and ſuch a Practice. And this HE told them with the greateſt Gentleneſs, Compaſſion,
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Affection. But notwithstanding that in general HE WAS MEEK; yet, when he had to deal with Men that were grown obstinate in Wickedness, such as the haughty SCRIBE, or hypocritical PHARISEE, who would neither embrace his Doctrine, nor let others be admitted into a State of Salvation, HE then could shew a becoming Warmth and Resentment; and denounce, what will always be the Consequence of Impenitence and Unbelief, WOE.

SHALL GOD-MAN then behave with the utmost CANDOUR towards offending human Nature: and shall we, who partake of the same fallible Nature, forget that Nature, and judge every Man uncharitably; not considering that by such Judgment we endanger our own Salvation? And besides judging uncharitably, shall we who stand in need of the humane compassionate Sentiments of others, not only judge, but condemn others unmercifully? This, however, we may lay down as a Maxim, that those among us who are thus liberal of their Censures, and reprove their offend-
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ing Brethren with BITTERNESS, are generally Persons that hate Instruction, and despise Reproof; and who, under a Shew of Zeal for GOD's Honour, take the Liberty to abuse all, because they are well assured that they deserve the just Censure of all.

SUCH haughty SCORNERS, such Contemners of their Brethren, tho' we cannot expect any Amendment of Life in consequence of our reproving them; if for no other Reason, yet for this we ought to SMITE, that is, rebuke them friendly, that the simple may not by a false Shame follow their Steps, and catch the Infection by Imitation.

ALL Offenders then, of what Complection soever they be, ought to receive Rebuke, Exhortation, Consolation. These, however, ought to be done in the Spirit of MEEKNESS, lest, instead of reforming those Objects of our Charity, we irritate them not only to condemn our good Advice,

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but likewise make them run, out of mere Obstinacy, greater Lengths in Wickedness.

AND this those may be tempted to do, whom we unjustly call DEPRAVED and entirely CORRUPTED; because they have been so unhappy as to offend in one remarkable Instance, tho' their former Life has been unexceptionable: not considering, that no Man can be term'd with Justice BAD from one Breach of Duty, but from the general Tenor of his Behaviour. DAVID was guilty both of Adultery and Murder; yet GOD, who knew the whole of his Life, pronounced him a Man after his own Heart. To judge thus candidly, we are all oblig'd, because the JUDGE of all Men has given us the Pattern. And then we will be best disposed to judge others with proper Allowances made to frail Humanity; and consequently will give our Advice with greater Mildness, when we judge ourselves; and, after Judgment, condemn what we find amiss in ourselves with Impartiality.

AND

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AND if our good Advice, when temper'd with Candour, Mildness, and Humanity, meets with Disdain, which is too often the Case; yet GOD, who regards the good Intentions, as well as the good Works of his Creatures, will, if we still persevere in this benevolent Disposition, admit us, in consequence of such Behaviour, and the Merits of our dear Redeemer, into the Mansions of immortal Youth.

WHICH, that all of us may be admitted into, may GOD, the proper Judge and Rewarder of every CHARITY, of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.



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ROUGH UNPOLISH'D
M A N N E R S
DESTRUCTIVE to the
PEACE of SOCIETY.
A SERMON.







A
S E R M O N.

PROV. XV. 1.

SOFT WORDS *turn away* WRATH, *but* GRIEVOUS
WORDS *stir up* ANGER.

THESE Words convey to us an important Lesson for the conducting of that most unruly of all Members, the TONGUE. We are taught here what particular sort of Words to use in order to mollify Men that are in WRATH. They are called SOFT WORDS from the Effect which they produce in the Hearts of those who are vehemently heated with Passion ; for the Word WRATH implies a Degree of Rage and Madness, inciting to Revenge : But this Rage, this Madness, this Desire of Revenge, may be easily

easily conquer'd at the Expence of a few soft Words. But what sort of Words may be properly term'd SOFT WORDS, may not be so properly determin'd. We may, however, from our Observation upon the different Effects which different Expressions produce in the Minds of Men, probably arrive at their Meaning. We find then by Experience, that if we have excited the Passion of ANGER, or the Excess of it, WRATH, in any Person, by a real or suppos'd Injury, the best Way to conquer such Danger, or such Wrath, is by using such Words as denote our Sorrow and Design of making Reparation for the Injury given. This Method of proceeding generally melts the most savage Minds into Tenderneſs and humane Sentiments, and disarms them of that furious Spirit of Revenge, which is the natural Consequence upon Anger and Wrath.

AND as soft submissive Expressions turn away Wrath; so, on the contrary, grievous Words stir up Anger. By GRIEVOUS WORDS are meant all bitter Reflections, whether just or unjust; all
Abuse,

Abuse, Detraction, and whatever Words have a natural Tendency to excite the Passion of Anger in those Persons we either converse with, or whom we make the Subjects of our Discourse. The Term GRIEVOUS may signify too, all Hints or Inuendoes suggested to a Neighbour's Prejudice, all ill-natur'd and ill-timed Jests, and every unkind and unprovok'd Harshness of Expression. But lest this inoffensive Manner of Behaviour should seem to many only prudential, rather than Matter of strict Duty, I shall endeavour to shew,

I. THE Reasonableness; and,

II. THE Necessity of using SOFT WORDS.

BUT before I proceed to shew the Reasonableness of them, I shall previously observe what the Terms SOFT WORDS do not mean. *First* then, they do not mean that we should use smooth flattering Speeches, in order to deceive the unwary, or with a View to promote our particular Interest to the Detriment of our Neighbours; either with re-

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gard to their moral and religious Character, or with relation to what many value more than the two former, their FORTUNES. Neither, *secondly*, ought any one to imagine that 'tis lawful to avert the Passion of Anger at the Expence of Truth. TRUTH generally, as Truth, does not often offend, especially those of an ingenuous Turn of Mind. 'Tis commonly the Manner of speaking of the Truth which gives the Offence. If then we must speak the Truth to an angry Person, we should deliver it without Harshness; especially if it be an ungrateful Truth; and with all the Signs of Sincerity, Compassion, and Affection. This Manner of Behaviour has, without Doubt, a great Influence over those who, if harshly treated in their Wrath, would have contemn'd the Advice, notwithstanding the Goodness of it, upon the Account of the Imprudence of the Adviser. There is a particular Art, which every one is not Master of, in preparing the Mind of an angry Person for the Reception of Truth. For we must not deal with angry Persons as with Men in their Senses: We should rather deal with them as with those unhappy Persons

confin'd in BEDLAM, who are not told of the Causes of their Disorder, for fear of increasing it; but are led gently to other Subjects, which softens their savage Fierceness for a while, makes them methodize their Ideas, and to forget, for a Time, that they are mad. Thus, as POETS dream, Souls in a State of Misery, in the infernal Regions, were charm'd with ORPHEUS's Musick in such a Manner as to forget, for a while, what they could vehemently wish to forget for ever, INEXPRESSIBLE TORMENT.

IF therefore we thus artfully and gently deal with angry Persons, we shall soon soften their Dispositions, and melt their savage Fierceness into Humanity; and when their Minds are thus soften'd, they become capable of any good Impression that we are pleas'd to stamp upon them: Truth then, tho' dress'd in somewhat disagreeable Colours, may have a free Passage into their Minds, and occasion, what is effected in every ingenuous Mind, a Reformation from Error.

NOR

NOR ought we, *thirdly*, to turn away the Wrath of an angry Person, by such Expressions as either give them Hopes, or discover to him the Means of avenging himself of those that have occasion'd his Wrath. This only cures one Ill by the Commission of a greater. For when Wrath is settled into Hatred, Malice, and a Desire of Revenge, such Rancour is not to be cured by any Expressions whatever. And he who has sooth'd this Passion of Anger, by exciting that hellish Disease of the Mind, MALICE, deserves so well of Mankind, as to merit the utter Exclusion from all the happy Advantages accruing from Society.

HAVING thus premised what the Terms SOFT WORDS do not mean, I shall proceed, as I propos'd in the *first* Place, to shew their REASONABLENESS.

AND this I shall do by considering that 'tis the best Means of promoting our temporal Concerns, and of procuring what cannot be obtain'd by a
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contrary Practice, HEALTH of Body, and PEACE of Mind.

AND, *first*, the Use of SOFT WORDS will make us more successful in our temporal Affairs.

IT must be allowed, that what gains us Respect and Esteem will consequently procure us Credit; and therefore must naturally make our Affairs prosperous. Smooth soft Words, when used out of no self-interested View, but out of a Principle of Duty, have properly Benevolence for their Cause; and when Men do talk from such a Principle, it may then best appear, when they cannot possibly gain any Advantage to themselves besides the Satisfaction of having done their Duty. When Men thus behave with Gentleness, Meekness, Moderation, and Justice, the World in general is prejudiced in their Favour; and because they hear with Meekness what is proposed to them, and are impartial in their Determinations in doubtful Cases submitted to their Decision, they are commonly pitch'd upon for Arbitrators: A Character

ter this, which always supposes superior Abilities, Wisdom, Integrity, Meekness. For, without Meekness, a Man might provoke, or be provok'd, by harsh unguarded Expressions, to make the Breach, which ought to have been healed up, much wider. But when each Side of the Question is heard with Patience, and the Parties concerned see that a strict Scrutiny is made into the Merits of the Cause, without any Favour or Affection, they submit to the Determinations of such honest Men without Anger, Murmuring, or Repining. But before Men can attain this happy compos'd Temper of Mind, several Difficulties are to be conquer'd. SELFISHNESS, the Cause of almost every Meanness in the human Soul, is generally the Reason why there is little Benevolence in the World. It gives the Mind a narrow contracted Way of Thinking. It makes a Man think much of himself, but little of others. This makes such Men careless in their Behaviour towards others, tho' at the same Time they are fretful and passionate if a particular Deference is not paid to them.

themselves. How then must we act towards Men of this wrong Turn? Must we humour their Pride, and sooth their Vanity? May we tickle their Imaginations with the softest Expressions that Fancy can invent? Must we not rather speak the Truth with Soberness, Gentleness, Meekness? And will not such Behaviour demonstrate our own Integrity, and greater Affection for them? Soft Words, or gentle Expressions, we may use without degenerating into Flattery; and though others, thro' a proud selfish Temper, do not please to speak well of us, and treat us with such common Complaisance and Civility as is due to Mankind, yet let not us behave with the same Meanness: We must remember not only that we are Men, but Men too that profess CHRISTIANITY; and then we cannot fail of wishing even our Enemies well, and of doing them, when in our Power, what will demonstrate the Sincerity of our Wishes, all manner of Good. This Softness of Behaviour under ill Treatment must always gain us Respect amongst those of ingenuous Minds, and consequently must, in proportion to our Esteem,

steem, advance our honest Schemes in the World.

BUT the Advantage of this Softness of Action will be better illustrated by considering the Disadvantage that the contrary Character labours under.

IMAGINE then a Man of rough unpolish'd Manners, haughty, fierce, passionate, dogmatical, and incapable of bearing any Contradiction; and you will soon, without any Hesitation, conclude, that such a Character is neither amiable, nor productive of its own, nor the Peace and Well-being of any Society. 'Tis not an austere Look, an haughty Tone of Voice, boisterous or passionate Expressions, that command Respect, and give Success to our Affairs. These Qualifications may excite Fear, and, what is worse, Hatred; may provoke the best and most faithful Friends to desert us, and betray our Secrets; and consequently may disconcert our best contriv'd and deep-laid Schemes. This is not founded on FANCY, but on a surer Foundation, EXPERIENCE. Men

are

are not naturally of such flexible Tempers as to bend to our Injunctions, when either imperiously or harshly commanded. And as with regard to NATURAL POWERS, the Effects will be always like their Causes; so in MORALS, generally speaking, Causes and Effects are similar. An angry Person will produce the same Passion in another, and one Injury begets another; so that we may from hence conclude, that the humane, not the rough Treatment, gains us Friends, and consequently gives Success to our Affairs.

AND, as a humane, candid Disposition, exhibited in Words and Actions, makes us more successful in the World, so does it promote the Health of Body and Soul.

IT must be granted, that whatever keeps the Blood and Animal Spirits in a continued equal Motion, must have a great Tendency towards the Preservation of the Body. That Meekness produces this Effect, every one who has experienced its contrary, can best tell. Violent Motions of

the Blood and Spirits shake the Animal Œconomy, distend the Vessels, excite Pain, bring on Diseases, and, what is worse, often occasion sudden Death: Whereas Meekness and humane Dispositions keep those Springs of Life in a regular Flow, which, consequently, add Vigour to the Body; and, what one would think might recommend it to the Acceptance of all, it naturally produces Health and long Life: So true is the Observation of our SAVIOUR, that “Blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the EARTH.” They shall enjoy the Earth, because their Bodies receive no rude Shocks from the Storms of Passion; and because all is Harmony, Peace, and Love within.

AND as Meekness, or Softness of Behaviour is the Body's Health, so does it promote the Peace and Serenity of Mind. Meekness is always productive of good Actions; from hence arises a secret and agreeable Satisfaction in the Mind. For it always supposes PATIENCE; and, what should always be a prevailing Principle in every Individual, BENEVOLENCE: It supposes too a Readiness

diness to hear, a Willingness to speak, and a Proneness to lend a helping Hand to all one's Fellow-Creatures. When any are possessed of this amiable Quality, which indeed is a Complication of good Qualities, because it cannot exist without other Virtues; they must be easy, chearful, and, because pleased with themselves, they must be consequently pleas'd with others. What agreeable Sensations this Behaviour must necessarily excite in the Mind, the Passionate may tell with SIGHS, and lament the Want of it with SORROW. They know what Anguish attends a Life dedicated to the wild impetuous Sallies of ungovern'd Passions. Pain they must receive on account of Indecencies committed in these Heats, and additional Pain too from the Observation and Judgment of the sensible and serious Part of Mankind. But the conscious Pleasure, the HEART-FELT JOY, arising from the benevolent Affections, from Meekness, Forbearance, Long-suffering, and Brotherly-kindness, are Pleasures, far unlike those of the Body; which always please, and never satiate;

and give

give real Satisfaction, because lawful, and proceeding from a Sense of Duty ; and are lasting, because rational. These Advantages, resulting from an uniform Softness of Behaviour, may be sufficient, in some Measure, to prove the Reasonableness of using *SOFT WORDS*. The Necessity of using them is what I proposed in the next Place to consider.

UNDER the foregoing Head I have spoke particularly concerning the Advantages of *MEEKNESS* ; because whoever is of a meek, mild Disposition, must consequently be remarkable for an agreeable Softness of speaking and acting. The Necessity of which I shall shew, *first*, from the Injustice of *RETALIATION* ; and, in the *next* Place, from the Consideration of a *FUTURE STATE*.

AND, *first*, with respect to the Unlawfulness of *RETALIATION*. When an angry Person attacks us with unjust Reproaches, and lays Things to our Charge that we know not ; nay, let his
Charges

Charges be just or unjust, the Question is, whether we ought to answer him with the same Sharpness, or to endeavour, by soft Words, and the mildest Address, to humanize this Savage into Man? This Question may easily be solv'd both from Reason and Revelation. Men, while they continue in a Passion, throw out their Arrows, even BITTER WORDS; but whilst they remain in this State, they are justly term'd MADMEN, because they are depriv'd of Reason, and consequently are not worthy our Attention or Displeasure. But as, in the HUMAN BODY, the Acrimony of the Blood and Juices are corrected by soft LENIENT MEDICINES; so that Passion of ANGER, that short-liv'd Madness, is soonest compos'd, either by SILENCE, or by Answers deliver'd with GENTLENESS. And if we are unjustly accused of any Thing base in the Heat of Passion, and Crimes are laid to our Charge that we know not, since our Consciences accuse us not, why should we be disturbed? Why should we regard a MADMAN? Retaliation in such a Case would be an Argument of Guilt rather

ther than of Innocence: It would be a plain Proof, that we pay a greater Deference to the corrupt Practice of Human Nature, than to the pure Dictates of unprejudiced Reason, or to the more refin'd and beneficial Injunctions of an infallible God.

BESIDES, as Virtue consists in the due regulating of our Conduct according to Reason and Revelation; so to suffer ourselves to be hurried away by the violent Stream of Passion at the hearing of another's angry unjust Expressions, is not Virtue, but the Extreme of it. True Heroism consists in BEARING and FORBEARING; in bearing Injuries, and in forbearing from Revenge; and after this Plan the CHRISTIAN HERO is to be form'd. 'Tis true, human Nature strongly presses forward for Revenge; but 'tis brave, 'tis God-like to correct the Errors of that Nature; and to demonstrate, by our peaceable Behaviour, that GOD IS WITHIN US of a Truth.

AND

DESTRUCTIVE to SOCIETY. 239

AND from Revelation it still more evidently appears, that we ought not to return Injury for Injury ; but, on the contrary, we are commanded to return GOOD for ILL, and BLESSING for CURSING. For if our BRETHREN (for all Men in an extensive Sense are our Brethren) should offend seven Times, or seventy Times seven in a Day, it is our Duty to forgive them. To FORGIVE them, did I say? Nay, more, we must PRAY for them ; and forward, by all Means possible, their Salvation. But is this the Practice of the World? Are Men slow to Wrath, and ready to make Allowances for another's Failings? Are they compassionate, tender-hearted, forgiving? If this be not the Case, why do we profess Christianity? Why do we enlist ourselves as Soldiers under CHRIST's Banners, if we will not execute his just Commands? To act thus, resembles JUDAS, who profess'd himself CHRIST's Disciple, that he might the more effectually betray the LORD of Life: Or, 'tis like the Man, who, after he was told what he should do to be saved, went away sorrowful ; because he could not enjoy his
his

his present Grandeur, and an eternal Crown of Glory in Reversion.

BUT those Men are of worse Dispositions, who are angry upon every slight Occasion, who are furious for a Trifle, and would kill their best Friends for the least Indiscretion. But this Temper is inconsistent both with the Happiness of Society, and likewise with the Possession of that happy Place, where all is Harmony, Peace, and Love: Which leads me to consider, what I propos'd, *lastly*, that a mild forgiving Disposition is the necessary Preparative for a FUTURE STATE.

HEAVEN is described to be a Place where nothing but LOVE, and its Kindred-Virtues, can enter. Where Pride, Envy, Hatred, Malice, Anger, Wrath, Debate, and Contention, are eternally excluded. GOD is said to be LOVE, not only because his Love is extended to all his Works; but because he admits no Soul living to enjoy him, but such as has perfected itself by LOVE in this

State

State of Probation. 'Twas LOVE that created ;
'tis LOVE that preserves ; and 'twas LOVE that
redeem'd a miserable World. And if we consider
what keeps the HEAVENLY BODIES in per-
petual Harmony, we shall find it to be ATTRAC-
TION, which is only another Name for LOVE.
What is it that unites each Class of BEINGS but
LOVE ? And even in INANIMATE BODIES,
what is it that occasions such Cohesion of Parts,
such Union, Regularity, Symmetry, but Attraction,
Sympathy, Love ? And shall Love, or something
similar to Love, obtain in the irrational inanimate
Creation ? And shall Anarchy, Disorder, Confu-
sion, and every evil Work, prevail amongst the last
and best of GOD's Works, and the very Heads
of the Creation, MEN ? A sad Reflection upon
REASON this ! A Reflection did I say ? Nay,
more, 'tis the Disgrace, the Death of Reason ; be-
cause such Behaviour sets human Nature below
those Beings, which, tho' naturally less perfect,
follow the Laws prescrib'd them by the Author of
their Existence, GOD ALMIGHTY.

AND since Love is the uniting Principle of all Things, and the very Cement and Chain by which all Things are link'd together both in HEAVEN and EARTH, why should we break the Chain, and endanger both our present and future PEACE? Are we not made for Happiness? And is not LOVE made the prime Qualification of that Happiness?

LET us then lay the Foundation of Meekness, Patience, and Forbearance; and the agreeable Superstructure, LOVE, must follow. For unless we are of a mild forgiving Disposition, we can have no Love, no Benevolence for our Fellow-Creatures; and the Love of our Fellow-Creatures is made the Measure and Standard of our Love to GOD: For if we love not our Brother, that is, our FELLOW-MEN, that we have seen, how shall we love GOD that we have not seen?

AND as Love is the Principle that characterizes HEAVEN, is it not our Duty to practise that Virtue which will fit us for that peaceable Habitation? Certainly, except we bear the faint Resemblance of
the

the Divinity, except we keep the LAMP of Life always burning in our Hearts, and except we keep it always shining for the Benefit of our FELLOW-WARRIORS, we shall neither be happy here or hereafter. But if this be in us and abound, we shall not fail of turning away Wrath by soft Words, and a mild gentle Behaviour; and this must naturally gain us the kind Wishes of the Benevolent, which will serve us as a pleasant Gale to waft our peaceable Souls to that happy State, where the Waves of Life cease to roar, where the Afflicted cease from troubling, and the Weary be at REST.

WHICH happy State, that all of us may enjoy, by a meek and patient Behaviour, a Life of Righteousness and the Merits of our dear REDEEMER, may GOD of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.

T H E

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T H E
D U T Y of giving **A L M S**

C H E A R F U L L Y to the

P O O R,

R E C O M M E N D E D.

A S E R M O N.

P R E A C H E D A T

S t N I C H O L A S,

N E W C A S T L E U P O N T Y N E.



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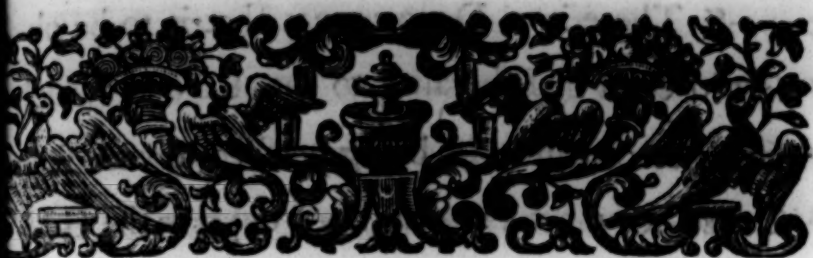


DUTY OF

RECOMMENDED

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

JOHN A. &



A

S E R M O N,

ROM. xii. 8. *latter Part.*

HE *that sheweth* MERCY *with* CHEARFULNESS.

THE APOSTLE in these Words gives us an Account of the Manner how this Duty of shewing MERCY to the POOR is to be perform'd and practis'd ; and that is, with ALACRITY and CHEARFULNESS. ---- " He that sheweth Mercy, let him do it with Chearfulness. " ---- 'Tis not enough to perform a Duty commanded by GOD ; but we must likewise be careful of the MANNER of its Performance, that it be done duly, and in such a Way as is suitable to it.

it.-----“ There is a DECENCY that is to be ob-
 “ serv’d even in Liberality to the POOR, which
 “ seems to consist in its being perform’d with such
 “ CHEARFULNESS, as may express the God-
 “ like Pleasure that is to be met with in obliging
 “ our Fellow-Creatures ; that may shew Good-
 “ nature and Benevolence overflowed ; and do
 “ not, as in some Men, run upon the Tilt, and
 “ taste of the Sediments of a grudging uncom-
 “ municative Disposition.-----For some People
 “ by their Way of consenting to a Benefaction,
 “ shall make it lose its Name ; whilst others double
 “ the Kindness and the Obligation : From some
 “ the desired Request drops indeed at last, but
 “ from so doubtful a Brow, that the obliged has
 “ almost as much Reason to resent the Manner of
 “ bestowing it, as to be thankful for the Favour
 “ itself. Others invite with so pleasing an Air,
 “ that they seem to meet the Petition half Way,
 “ and consent to a Request with a Countenance
 “ which proclaims the Satisfaction of their Minds
 “ in assisting the Distressed.

“ I N the Practice of every Virtue, there is
“ some additional Grace required, to give a Claim
“ in excelling in this or that particular Action.
“ A DIAMOND may want polishing, tho’ the
“ Value be still intrinsically the same; and the
“ same Good may be done with different Degrees
“ of Lustre. No Man should be contented with
“ himself that he barely does well, but he should
“ perform every Thing in the best and most be-
“ coming Manner that he is able.”-----When we
come into G O D’s Courts to hear his Word, and
be instructed in our Duty, ’tis not enough for us
to give unto the Minister the hearing of the Ear;
but we must be careful to hear in a due Manner,
with Reverence, with Attention, and without Pre-
judice.----When we spread forth our Hands to-
wards Heaven, and open our Mouths in Prayer
unto G O D, ’tis not enough that we offer the Mo-
tion of our Lips, but we must likewise be careful
that our Hearts go along with our Mouths.-----
When we fast and afflict ourselves before G O D,
’tis not enough to hang down our Heads like a

BULRUSH, and to spread **SACKCLOTH** upon our **LOINS**, to rend our **GARMENTS**, and smite upon the **THIGH**; but all this must be attended with hearty Penitence, with a real Remorse and Compunction of Mind.----And so likewise, when we practise the Duty of **ALMSGIVING**, when we shew **MERCY** to the **POOR**, 'tis not enough for us to extend our Hands to the Indigent, to give of our Bread to the Hungry, or to proffer Drink to the Thirsty, or to cloath the Naked with our Garments, but all this must be done with a willing Mind, and with a chearful Heart; for otherwise our shewing of Mercy is not perform'd in a due Manner, and for Want of this the Duty will prove an insignificant Thing: And therefore it is no Wonder, if the **APOSTLE** (altho' he does suppose, and take it for granted, that a Christian is not wanting in the Practice of **ALMSGIVING**, in shewing **MERCY** to the **POOR**) enjoins us that we be particularly careful that this be done with **CHEARFULNESS**. For no greater Misery can befall the Poor than to be forced to depend on the Help of such Persons, whose tender Mercies are

CRUELITIES. THAT can never be a Love of our BRETHREN, THAT can never be chearful Benevolence, which does not sympathize with the Miserable: THAT can never be true chearful Benevolence, which begins with trampling on that Self-love which is inseparable from the human Breast, and never relieves the indigent Soul, till it has wounded it in its tenderest Part: THAT can never be chearful Benevolence, which throws into Despair those that are the Objects of it. Some Pretenders there are to this Virtue, who ne'er bestow an Alms, or relieve the Poor, but they unmercifully insist on a particular Enumeration of all their Miseries; they bring Face to Face the whole GROUPE of their Misfortunes; of themselves (for ought these Impertinents can tell) insupportable: and tho' the Ceremonial of their Questions, or rather of their burthensome Examination, preceeds the Assistance they are pleased to afford the Poor, yet they are pleased to call that Benevolence, they are pleased to call that BROTHERLY LOVE; but, in my Mind, it is an Act brutal, barbarous, and inhuman; an Insult upon Self-

Self-love, and not the Result of any generous, any Christian Sentiment: 'Tis a Benevolence, in short, that does Violence to the Advice of the **APOSTLE**, who would have us to shew Mercy to the Poor with **CHEARFULNESS**.

THE Business of this Discourse on these Words of the **APOSTLE** shall be, to shew the several Ties and Obligations we are under of shewing Mercy unto the Poor with **CHEARFULNESS**: ---And that I shall do from the following Considerations.

I. **WE** ought to shew Mercy unto the Poor with **CHEARFULNESS**, because of the Relation they stand in as to **GOD**. For as poor and mean soever as they are, yet, 'tis certain, they are not such despicable Persons as the Disguise of their Misfortune under which they appear doth represent them. The very meanest of them hath an immortal Soul, by which he does nearly resemble **GOD** himself, and is comparable to the **ANGELS**; and all of them derive their Pedigree from **HEAVEN**,
and

and can call the KING ETERNAL, the SOVEREIGN LORD of all the World, their FATHER. Such they are as MEN, but much more considerable are they as CHRISTIANS; for as vile and contemptible soever as they look, as meanly as they are cloath'd, yet GOD himself hath such a Regard to them, that for their Sakes he descended from Heaven, and took their Nature upon him in the Person of his SON, and was pleased to lay down his Life for them: As contemptible soever as they look, and as meanly as they are cloath'd, yet, by virtue of their Christianity, they are all of them Members of CHRIST, Children of GOD, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of HEAVEN. In a Word, as contemptible soever as they look, and as meanly as they are cloath'd, yet all of them are the Objects of GOD's especial Providence and Care, of his fatherly Love and Affection, and that equally with the greatest Princes and Potentates; since ELIHU tells us, “* He accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth

* Job xxxiv. 19.

“eth the Rich more than the Poor ; they are all
 “ the Work of his Hands.-----But,

2dly, WE ought to shew Mercy unto the Poor with CHEARFULNESS, because of the Relation they stand in as to us ; they are our KINSMEN, nay, our very BRETHREN, both by NATURE and GRACE. By NATURE, all Nations of Men being made of † ONE BLOOD, as the APOSTLE expresses it ; and by GRACE, all Christians being Children of the same heavenly Father, all Christians being regenerated into the same lively Hope, and being Co-heirs of the same eternal Inheritance. So that if we do not consider the Necessities of the Poor, and relieve them with CHEARFULNESS according to our Ability, we HIDE ourselves from our * OWN FLESH, as the PROPHEET expresses it, we are unkind to our very Kinsmen and Brethren : Nay, if we are wanting in this Duty, we disclaim all our Title to Christianity, all Relation to CHRIST, our elder
 Bro-

† Acts xvii. 26. * Isa. lviii. 7.

Brother ; the Love of our Fellow-Creature, and the shewing Mercy to them with CHEARFULNESS, being the only infallible Evidence and Demonstration of our Love to him. “ § By this “ shall all Men know, says he, that ye are my “ Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.” He does not instance in FAITH, or in HOPE, in KNOWLEDGE, or in any other Christian Virtue ; but he pitches upon BROTHERLY LOVE, and makes that the MARK and CHARACTER of his Disciples, by which they may be distinguish’d and known from all the World beside.----Nay, the Love of our Brethren, and the shewing Mercy to them with CHEARFULNESS, is made the Test of the Sincerity and Reality of our Love to GOD the FATHER. * “ This is my Commandment, says our SAVIOUR, that he that “ loveth GOD, love his BROTHER also. He “ that loveth not his BROTHER, whom he “ hath seen, how can he love GOD whom he hath “ not seen ?” ----That is, if to MEN, with whom
we

† John xiii. 35.

* 1 John iv. 20, 21.

we daily converse, we do not express any Love, what Reason is there to imagine that we sincerely love G O D ; when, of our Love to him, and the Sincerity of it, we were never able to make this Trial, because we never saw him, nor had Opportunity offer'd us of shewing any real Acts of Love and Kindness to him? But somewhat may be judged, I think, from the Difficulty of the Thing; for certainly he that doth not the easier, will hardly be suppos'd to do what is more difficult. Now you may easily imagine, that it is hard to love one I never saw; but no such difficult Matter to have a Kindness for the Person I have seen, since Sight and Conversation is one Motive of Affection; and therefore, inasmuch as we never saw G O D at any Time, but do see our B R E T H R E N daily, it very well may be concluded, that he who loveth not his B R O T H E R, whom he hath seen, does not, neither can be supposed to love G O D whom he hath not seen, tho' he should make never such zealous Protestations of his L O V E to him. But if we love our poor B R E T H R E N, whom we have seen, and shew Mercy unto them with C H E A R-

F U L N E S S,

FULNESS, 'tis a certain Sign that we have a sincere Love for G O D; who hath appointed them to be his Deputies and Proxies; and he hath promised to look upon that which is given to them as given to himself. “ * He that hath Pity on “ the P O O R, lendeth to the L O R D,” says the W I S E M A N: And says our S A V I O U R, (speaking of those who had fed the hungry and cloath'd the naked) “ † Inasmuch as ye have done it unto “ the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it “ unto me; § and G O D is not unrighteous to “ forget your Work and Labour of L O V E, which “ ye have shew'd towards his Name, in that ye “ have ministred to the S A I N T S, and do minister,” says the A P O S T L E. When therefore at any Time we see a real Object of Charity before our Eyes, we may very well imagine (and it is no vain Fancy to imagine as much) that we see C H R I S T our S A V I O U R standing before us, and ready to receive an A L M S at our Hands; to whom we may be kind and courteous, if we please, we

K k

now

* Prov. xix. 17. † Matth. xxv. 40. § Heb. vi. 10.

now having an Opportunity offer'd us for shewing our Kindness towards H I M.

S U C H is the Relation that the P O O R stand in as to u s, that by shewing Mercy to them with C H E A R F U L N E S S, we are assured in S C R I P T U R E, that we shall obtain Mercy ourselves at the Hand of G O D. “ * Blessed are the merciful, “ says our S A V I O U R, for they shall obtain “ Mercy.” Upon this Account it is that D A N I E L advises “ N E B U C H A D N E Z Z A R to “ † break off his Sins by Righteousness, and “ his Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the P O O R.” And St J A M E S tells us, that “ § Mercy rejoiceth “ against J U D G M E N T ; ” κατὰκαραται, it boasteth, it triumpheth over Judgment, that is, it appeaseth G O D ’ s Wrath, and prevents our C O N D E M N A T I O N and P U N I S H M E N T.

S U C H is the Relation that the P O O R stand in as to u s, that by shewing Mercy to them with
C H E A R-

* Matth. v. 7. † Dan. iv. 27. § Ja. ii. 13.

CHEARFULNESS, we are promis'd all earthly Blessings, such as Health and Peace, and Prosperity, and Deliverance in Time of Trouble, Comfort and Consolation upon a Sick-bed. “ * Blef-
 “ fed is he that considereth the Poor and Needy,
 “ the LORD will deliver him in Time of Trouble:
 “ The LORD will preserve and keep him alive,
 “ and he shall be blessed upon the Earth; the
 “ LORD will strengthen him upon the Bed of
 “ Languishing, and make all his BED in his
 “ SICKNESS.” And because there is one seem-
 ingly considerable Objection that may be made
 against the Practice of this Duty, viz. the Fear
 of impoverishing ourselves, and prejudicing our
 Estates; for the removing of these Fears, GOD has
 solemnly promis'd not only Security from Want,
 but also a thriving Condition to charitable Persons.
 “ † He that giveth to the Poor, shall not lack;
 “ § the liberal SOUL shall be made fat.”

ALL these Things consider'd, 'tis monstrous, I
 think,

* Psal. xli. 1. † Prov. xxviii. 27. § ib. xi. 25.

think, how a Man can live with so little Reflection, as to fancy he is not in a Condition very unjust and disproportion'd to the rest of Mankind, while he enjoys Wealth, and exerts no Benevolence or Bounty, shews no Mercy to the Needy and Afflicted, who stand in so near a Relation both to GOD and himself. “ One would really imagine, from the “ Behaviour of the Rich to the Poor, that they “ stood in no Manner of Relation to each other; “ that they were Creatures quite of a different “ Species; especially when one looks about him, “ and sees a Creature all in Rags, crying out in “ the Name of all that’s good and sacred, to be- “ hold his Misery, and give him some Supply a- “ gainst Hunger and Nakedness; and the Rich, “ and their very Servants, passing by them with “ an Air of Scorn and Triumph. But so it is, “ that POVERTY and RICHES stand now-a- “ days in People’s Imaginations, in the Places of “ GUILT and INNOCENCE; and, when they “ would speak to the Advantage of others, they “ say they are People of CONDITION. But in “ all Seasons there will be some Instances of Per-
“ sons

“ sons who have Souls too large to be taken with
“ popular Prejudices; and while the rest of Man-
“ kind are contending for Superiority in Power
“ and Wealth, have their Thoughts bent upon
“ the Necessities of those below them. The
“ CHARITY-SCHOOLS which have been e-
“ rected in this TOWN, are the greatest Instances
“ of Publick Spirit the Age has produced in this
“ Part of the World. And for the particular
“ Occasion of them, there cannot any offer more
“ worthy a generous Mind. Would you do an
“ handsome Thing without Return? Do it for an
“ INFANT that is not sensible of the Obligation.
“ Would you do it for PUBLICK GOOD? Do
“ it for one who will be an HONEST ARTIFI-
“ CER. Would you do it for the Sake of
“ HEAVEN? Give it to one who shall be in-
“ structed in the WORSHIP of him for whose
“ Sake you gave it. It is, methinks, a most laud-
“ able Institution this, if it were of no other Ex-
“ pectation than that of producing a Race of good
“ and useful SERVANTS, who will have more
“ than a liberal, a RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

“ What

“ What would not a Man do, in common Pru-
 “ dence, to lay out in purchase of one about him,
 “ who would add to all his Orders he gave, the
 “ Weight of the COMMANDMENTS, to enforce
 “ an Obedience to them? For one who would
 “ consider his MASTER as his FATHER, his
 “ FRIEND, and BENEFACTOR, upon the
 “ easy Terms, and in Expectation of no other
 “ Return but MODERATE WAGES and
 “ GENTLE USAGE? It is the common Vice
 “ of CHILDREN to run too much among the
 “ Servants; from such as are educated in THESE
 “ Places they would see nothing but LOWLINESS
 “ in the Servant, which would not be disingenuous
 “ in the Child. All the ill Offices and defama-
 “ tory Whispers which take their Birth from Do-
 “ mesticks, would be prevented, if this Charity
 “ could be made universal; and a good Man
 “ might have a Knowledge of the whole Life of
 “ the Persons he designs to take into his House
 “ for his own Service, or that of his Family or
 “ Children, long before they were admitted. This
 would

“ would create endearing Dependencies ; and the
“ Obligation would have a paternal Air in the
“ Master, who would be relieved from much
“ Care and Anxiety, from the Gratitude and Diligence of an humble FRIEND attending him
“ as his SERVANT. In short, those that have
“ the Happiness to be Contributors to such religious Institutions of INNOCENTS, can never,
“ I’m sure, dispose of Money more to their Satisfaction and Advantage. As for my own Part,
“ the Good-will I bear to Mankind makes me
“ heartily wish those pious Works may be encouraged, that the present Promoters may reap the
“ Delight, and Posterity the Benefit of them. ----
“ But whilst we are cultivating this young hopeful Offspring, and shewing Mercy to them with
“ CHEARFULNESS, let not the ANCIENT
“ and HELPLESS Creatures be shamefully neglected. There are, I know, many Impostors
“ among them : Lameness and Blindness are very
“ often acted ; but still there are many proper
“ Objects that implore your Charity. There
“ are many industrious poor HOUSE-KEEPERS
“ who

“ who submit to the hardest Labour and coarsest
 “ Fare, rather than endure the Shame of taking
 “ Relief from the PARISH, or asking it in the
 “ STREETS, that we ought not to overlook;
 “ they are the HUNGRY, the THIRSTY, and
 “ the NAKED, that we are commanded by our
 “ SAVIOUR to relieve; and we ought to be
 “ persuaded, that if any Man is come hither for
 “ Shelter against Persecution or Oppression, that
 “ he is the STRANGER that we ought to take
 “ in. If any Countryman of our own is fallen in-
 “ to the Hands of INFIDELS, and lives in a
 “ State of miserable Captivity, this is the Man in
 “ PRISON, and we should contribute to his
 “ RANSOM. It were endless to mention all the
 “ Variety of Wretchedness, and the numberless
 “ POOR that are proper Objects, and to whom we
 “ ought to shew Mercy with CHEARFULNESS.
 “ Who, without an Eye of Pity, can see a disabled
 “ SAILOR, the Purveyor of many of the Ad-
 “ vantages of Life, destitute of Necessaries?
 “ Who can behold an honest SOLDIER, that
 “ bravely withstood the ENEMY, prostrate, and
 “ in

“ in Want amongst his FRIENDS? Let not such
“ as these upbraid their COUNTRYMEN with
“ Inhumanity, and Want of MERCY; let not
“ our Ears be deaf to their COMPLAINTS, nor
“ our EYES overlook their PERSONS.”

I SHOULD propose it as a Rule to every one who is provided with any Competency of Fortune more than sufficient for the Necessaries of Life, to lay aside a certain Proportion of his Income for the Use of the POOR. This I would look upon as an OFFERING to HIM who has a Right to the WHOLE, for the Use of those whom he has described in SACRED WRIT as his own REPRESENTATIVES upon EARTH. At the same Time we should manage our Charity with such Prudence and Caution, that we may not hurt our own Friends and Relations, whilst we are doing Good to those who are Strangers to us----We should prescribe to ourselves many particular Days of FASTING and ABSTINENCE, in order to increase our private Bank of Charity; and set aside what would be the current Expences of those

Times for the Use of the Poor and Needy : We should divert the Money which we sometimes design to spend in going to a CONCERT, or an ASSEMBLY, a COFFEE-HOUSE, or a TAVERN, or the Entertainments of the THEATRE, upon some Object of Charity, or the first necessitous Person that falls in our Way. By these Means we may be charitable to the POOR, without impoverishing ourselves or our Friends, and enjoy our Estate or Income by making it the Property of others.

THERE are few Men so cramped in their private Affairs, who may not be charitable after this Manner, without any Disadvantage to themselves, or Prejudice to their Families. It is but sometimes sacrificing a DIVERSION or Convenience to the POOR, and turning the usual Course of our Expences into a better Channel. This is, I think, not only the most prudent and convenient, but the most meritorious Piece of Charity, which we can put in Practice. By this Method we in some Measure share the Necessities
of

of the POOR at the same Time that we relieve them; and make ourselves not only their PATRONS, but their FELLOW-SUFFERERS.

BEFORE I conclude, I cannot forbear making an Extract of several Passages which I have always read with great Delight in the Book of JOB. It is the Account which that holy Man gives of his Behaviour in the Days of his Prosperity.

“ OH that I were as in Months past, as in the
“ Days when GOD preserved me: When his
“ Candle shined upon my Head, and when by
“ his Light I walked through Darknes: When
“ the ALMIGHTY was yet with me: When
“ my Children were about me: When I washed
“ my Steps with Butter, and the Rocks poured
“ out Rivers of Oil!

“ WHEN the Ear heard me, then it blessed
“ me; and when the Eye saw me, it gave Wit-
“ nesses to me: Because I delivered the Poor that
“ cried, and the Fatherless, and him that had
“ none

“ none to help him. The Blessing of him that
 “ was ready to perish came upon me; and I
 “ caused the Widow’s Heart to sing for Joy. I
 “ was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet was I to the
 “ Lame; I was a Father to the Poor, and the
 “ Cause which I knew not I searched out. Did
 “ not I weep for him that was in Trouble? Was
 “ not my Soul grieved for the Poor? Let me be
 “ weighed in an even Balance, that GOD may
 “ know mine Integrity. If I did despise the
 “ Cause of my Man-Servant, or of my Maid-
 “ Servant, when they contended with me: What
 “ then shall I do when GOD riseth up? And
 “ when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did
 “ not he that made me in the Womb make him?
 “ And did not one fashion us in the Womb? If
 “ I have with-held the Poor from their Desire, or
 “ caused the Eyes of the Widow to fail, or have
 “ eaten my Morsel myself alone, and the Father-
 “ less hath not eaten thereof: If I have seen any
 “ perish for Want of Cloathing, or any Poor with-
 “ out Covering: If his Loins have not blessed me,
 and

“ and if he were not warmed with the Fleece of
“ my Sheep : If I have lifted up mine Hand
“ against the Fatherless when I saw my Help in
“ the Gate ; then let mine Arm fall from my
“ Shoulder-blade, and mine Arm be broken from
“ the Bone. If I have rejoiced at the Destruction
“ of him that hated me, or lift up myself when
“ Evil found him : (Neither have I suffered my
“ Mouth to sin, by wishing a Curse to his Soul)
“ The Stranger did not lodge in the Street ; but
“ I opened my Doors to the Traveller. If my
“ Land cry against me, or that the Furrows there-
“ of likewise complain : If I have eaten the
“ Fruits thereof without Money, or have caused
“ the Owners thereof to lose their Life ; let Thistles
“ grow instead of Wheat, and Cockles instead of
“ Barley.”

IN what heroick Instances is CHARITY here described, and with what a noble Heat of Sentiments ! If the Account which that good Man gives of his Demeanour in the Days of his Affluence, were consider'd only as a human Composition,

tion, it is a finer Picture of a charitable and merciful Man than is to be met with in any other Author; and an Exemplar worthy of our Imitation, as far as it is in our Power. It should excite us not to condemn the Poor for their POVERTY, and behave to them with that CHURLISHNESS that is customary with NARROW MINDS; but to commiserate their Condition, relieve them, in a proper Manner, with CHEARFULNESS; and not add to their Calamity by that of INSULT and MORTIFICATION, which is more cutting and insupportable than POVERTY itself.

IF we suppose that there are SPIRITS or ANGELS who look into the Ways of Men, as it is highly probable there are, both from Reason and Revelation; how different are the Notions which they entertain of us, from those which we are apt to form of one another? Were they to give us in their Catalogue of such Worthies as are now living, how different would it be from that which any of our own Species would draw up?

WE are dazzled with the Splendour of Titles, the Ostentation of Learning, the Noise of Victories: They, on the contrary, see the PHILOSOPHER in the Cottage, who possesses his Soul in Patience and Thankfulness, under the Pressures of what LITTLE MINDS call POVERTY, and MEANNESS, and DISTRESS: They do not look for great Men at the Head of Armies, or among the Poms of a Court; but often find them out in Shades and Solitudes, in the private Walks and Bye-paths of Life: The Evening's Walk of a WISE MAN is more illustrious in their Sight, than the March of a GENERAL at the Head of several thousand Men: A Contemplation of God's Works; a voluntary Act of Justice to our own Detriment; a generous Concern for the Good of Mankind; Tears that are shed in Silence for the Miseries of others; a private Desire of Resentment broken and subdued: In short, an unfeign'd Exercise of Humility, or any other Virtue, are such Actions as are glorious in their Sight, and denominate Men great and reputable. The most famous among us are often look'd upon with Pity,
with

with Contempt, or with Indignation; while those who are the most obscure and contemptible among their own Species, are regarded with Love, with Approbation and Esteem.

To conclude; we should not be led away by the Opinion of the World in our Estimation of one another, but consider the Figure that every Person will make, both Rich and Poor, at that Time when Wisdom shall be justified of her Children, and nothing pass for GREAT or GOOD, which is not an Ornament or Perfection to human Nature.-----Which that we may all do, may God of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.

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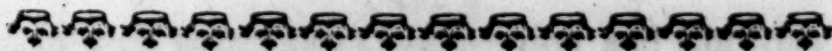


THE
DANGER of FACTION,
AND
BANDYING into PARTIES,
WITH THE
Proper Methods of ALLAYING them;
CONSIDER'D.

A SERMON.

PREACHED AT
St N I C H O L A S,
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE,

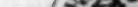
September 22. 1745.



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DANGER OF FASHION.

BANDYING INDUSTRIES



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NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE.

8-17-45

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A

S E R M O N.

GAL. V. 15.

*But if ye BITE and DEVOUR one another, take
HEED that ye be not CONSUMED one of another.*

THIS is an excellent Lesson of Advice given by the Apostle St PAUL to the Christians of GALATIA; who were engaged in great Heats and eager Disputes about some Matters which might easily have been compromised and made up, if they had come to them with that calm Consideration and Christian Love, which became the holy Religion they professed, and the Things about which they contested. ----He suggests to them by the Way, that most
of

of the Matters they push'd on in their Disputes with so much Fury and Contention, were either no Parts of Religion at all, viz. some nice Punctilios of the Ceremonial Law; or else did not deserve such high Regard in their Affections, as to come in Competition with the Love of their BRETHREN; which was either laid aside, or much weaken'd, by their fierce Contentions about these lesser Matters. This he enforces by telling them, "All the Law is fulfilled in one Word, "which is this, Thou shalt love thy NEIGHBOUR as thyself." That is, that the Love of our NEIGHBOUR, as it is a short and easy, so it is a principal Lesson of Christianity, and ought not to be lessen'd but in Differences of the highest Importance; which Christian Love and CHARITY, as it is agreeable to the Will of GOD, so it is like to have a more especial Blessing and Reward. But as for Factions and Contentions, and peevish Disputes among Christians, without just Occasion, he tells them plainly, that they must expect no good Effects from them; but that if they be
not

not speedily stopped, they are likely to end in their utter Ruin and Confusion. “ But if ye bite
 “ and devour one another, take heed that ye be
 “ not consumed one of another.”----No more need be said towards the explaining these Words of the Apostle, which are plain to every Understanding; they affording us a very wise Caution against FACTION and SEDITION, from the Consideration that they are the Pest and Destruction of every Society: And therefore, what I shall at present speak upon this Subject, I shall reduce to these three Heads, and shew,

I. HOW FACTION, and BANDYING into Parties, tend to the Ruin of any CHURCH or NATION.

II. BY what proper Methods FACTIONS may be allay'd.

III. I SHALL make some Application with respect to ourselves, and the present State of Affairs.

I.

I. I AM to shew how FACTION, and BANDY-
ING into Parties, tend to the Ruin of any CHURCH
or NATION.

NOW Faction, and BANDYING into Parties,
tend to the Ruin of any Church or Nation ;

1st, " BECAUSE this very much weakens the
" Strength and Power of any such Community."
A Community, without Unity, is a dead and
lifeless Thing : 'Tis this which gives it a Soul,
and Nerves, and Vigour ; and so many Degrees as
you take off from this Union, so much the nigher
it comes to its Dissolution, and a perfect Anarchy.
When the Members of a Society are tied together
by a hearty Affection and an unanimous Concur-
rence in their Designs, they are like the numerous
Threads of a CABLE twisted into Cordage of an
immense Strength ; whilst the same, disunited and
parcell'd out into different Interests, are but like
a SINGLE TWINE, subject to the Snap of the
weakest Hand. But Faction is yet more prejudi-
cial to a Community than a bare Negation or want
of

of Union ; for every single factious Person in a Nation, not only denies his own Assistance to the Community, but takes off likewise an equal Force of his Adversary : So that a Nation, which consists only of Two Millions of People, is equal in Strength to a Nation of Ten Millions, whereof Eight Millions are engaged in two contrary Factions. For, on this Supposition, the two remaining Millions are the only effectual Persons to be depended upon for the Security of the Nation ; the other Parties being set and at a Stand, and wholly taken up in their mutual Opposition to each other. This is demonstrably true, whenever the two contending Parties are steadily resolved upon each other's Destruction, and will not be awaken'd into Concord from the Danger of a common Enemy. And as History has given us frequent Instances of this Infatuation and Madness ; so no Party, in the Heat of their Contention, can be assured, either of their own Prudence, or of the Grace of GOD, that they shall not fall into this desperate Folly. And the Case is exactly the same in a Church or Body of Christians. And, among innumerable
Faults,

Faults, Unity, or mutual Concord, is the only Virtue that I know which is peculiar to the Church of ROME. In this “they are wiser in their Generation than the Children of Light :” By these prudent Methods, under the Permission of GOD, for the Punishment of the Sins of the World, they have kept up their idolatrous Polity for so many Ages ; whilst we of the REFORMED CHURCH, in the Midst of so many Animosities and Divisions, have had nothing to preserve us, but the unaccountable Providence of GOD, and a better Cause.

2dly, “BECAUSE this very much perplexes “their Councils.” It is the highest Advantage for a Nation to have their Affairs go on under the Influence of wise and steady Councils ; when Men of the greatest Ability are gathered together, who, with the utmost Compass of a sagacious Capacity, can take in all the Possibilities of fortuitous Events, which may affect the Government they are entrusted with ; who can, with impartial Consideration, scan over whatever is proposed in those
great

great Debates, and separate the plausible and the specious from what is solid and of lasting Convenience to the Nation ; and who will set aside nothing that is wisely offered out of any invidious Regard, but will with Readiness embrace every Thing which has a fair Prospect and Tendency to the Good of the Community, from whatsoever Quarter it comes, as well from the Mouth of a private Adversary, as a Bosom-Friend. Now, a Nation can enjoy the Happiness of this blessed Effect, only when they are at perfect Union with themselves, and no Faction is reigning among them : For Faction quite poisons all political Debates, represents whatever is most honestly and wisely advanced in the worse Colours ; raises Suspensions of the most entire Proposals ; and puts Men upon Projects which in their Conscience they believe to be less conducive to the Publick, rather than let their hated Adversaries, of the opposite Party, reap the Honour and Success but of a prudent Proposal. This incites Men, out of Envy and Revenge, to betray the Counsels they are bound to conceal ; to calumniate the Actions of good Ministers of State,

and to gloss over the pernicious Designs of bad ones ; to be scanty and precipitate in Debates for the Publick Good, but to spare no Time or Application in advancing the Interest of a Party ; in defending the Faults of their own Friends, and exposing those of their Adversaries ; in excusing or extenuating great Crimes, or punishing smaller with unmerciful Severities. These have been the constant Effects of Faction in the Councils of Nations throughout all Ages ; and never any Government had a Downfall or Decay, but that these unhappy Accidents were the first of its Misfortunes, and gave a Rise to its following Ruin.

3^{dly}, " BECAUSE this exposes them to their " Adversaries." The Power of a Nation does not always consist in the actual Strength of Forces, or the Abilities of a Ministry. There is oftentimes a great deal owing to Opinion ; and an Enemy frequently with-holds his Hand, not because a Country is insuperable, but because he thinks it so. Nay, where sufficient Strength is not wanting, if you lay a Nation open to Contempt, and make it
vile

vile in the Opinion of its Enemies, you have gone half Way into the Conquest of it before a Stroke is struck ; for an Adversary comes on then amain, and pushes forward with Alacrity and Courage, when he has poor and mean Thoughts of those who are to oppose him. Now, can any Nation be pictured out in such wretched Colours, and be rendered so despicable in the Sight of their Enemies, as that People which is divided into great and spiteful Factions ? How do they load one another with all the opprobrious Language which an envenom'd Rage can suggest ; upbraiding each other with Falseness and Treachery, Cruelty and Villainy, or any other Crime which is best suited to blacken the Character of their Opposites ? A COURT is represented as full of Flattery and Dissimulation, or intent only upon the advancing of private Fortunes, and crushing the publick Liberties ; a CITY traduced for Mutiny and Sedition ; and a COUNTRY, sometimes for want of Zeal and Affection for their Governors ; and at other Times for a Superabundancy of it : Some calumniated for endeavouring to introduce an arbitrary Power,

Power, and others as designing a democratical Licence : Some traduced for Hypocrisy, and others for Prophaneness : Some noted for Weakness, and others for Corruption : Some branded for Bigots, and others for Atheism. Now, whenever national Distempers are wrought up to these Heights, what Advantage cannot the common Enemy propose to themselves, when they have to do with a People, which, without the Expence of Intelligence, will trumpet out their own Failures themselves, and proclaim to the World that they are already conquer'd by their own VICES?

4thly, " BECAUSE this renders them obnoxious to the Anger of GOD." There is no Command of GOD in SCRIPTURE more positive and plain, and no Invitation more pressing than those which engage us to PEACE and UNITY, and dissuade from STRIFE and CONTENTION. It is the particular Command of our BLESSED LORD, and the last and most pressing Close of a very affectionate Discourse of his,

" Have

“ * Have Peace one with another :” And the APOSTLE to the HEBREWS adviseth us to “ † Follow P E A C E with all Men.” Men therefore that are engaged in a Faction can never be good Christians ; for that Malice and Bitterness which usually possesses the Minds of those that are in a Party, is perfectly inconsistent with the Charity which the Christian Religion indispensably requires.----Proceed we now to shew,

II. BY what proper Methods F A C T I O N S may be allay’d.

Now I shall here lay down some few Rules, which, according to the best of my Judgment, I conceive may be very expedient to this End ; submitting it always to the better Judgment of others, especially to those whom I have now the Honour of speaking before.

1st, “ To allow those who are of a different

“ O P I-

* Mark ix. 50.

† Heb. xii. 14.

“ OPINION or INTEREST from us a pretty frequent and easy CONVERSATION.” There can be no Party in a Nation so wicked and detestable, that we should hate them like DOGS and SNAKES: They do not forfeit the Rights of common Humanity and good Neighbourhood, from entertainng some Thoughts different from ours: Nay, by a fair Correspondence, our Differences do very much lessen; for then we have no Alienation of Affections to keep us at a Distance, and nothing lies between us but the pure Merits of our Cause. And in a calm and friendly Debate of mutual Misunderstandings, I never yet knew two Adversaries but that they were nigher in Opinion to each other than they thought they were, whilst they kept at a Distance. For their strangeness and shyness to one another, kept up always their Passions eager, and, as it were, ready charged for Execution; they entertain’d a World of groundless Jealousies and Suspitions, and were blown up into yet greater Flames by the Misrepresentations of designing Men; which have been all laid aside, and quietly compos’d, as they came to understand
and

and freely converse with one another. Then their mutual Civilities, the Gentleness of their Language, and the Sweetness of their Behaviour, has so endear'd their Affections, that the mistaken Person seldom fails of Conviction, and giving himself up to Truth; or, however, the Difference is very much lessen'd, and all Hatred and Malice being laid aside, there is only the Opinion of the Party, without the Virulence, retain'd.

NOW our BLESSED SAVIOUR prosecuted this Method with the most happy Success. For he vouchsafed to undergo the Stain of conversing with the Worst of Men, with PUBLICANS and SINNERS, and with the keenest of Factions, the PHARISEES and SADDUCES: But by his endearing Conversation, and by his taking the prudent Occasions of instilling wise, and holy, and peaceable Principles, in a short Time he brought into one common Religion the most opposite Parties, and made the greatest SAINTS out of the most flagitious OFFENDERS.

2dly, "ANOTHER Method to allay a FAC-
"TION, is by avoiding all CALUMNIES and
"invidious REFLECTIONS upon the opposite
"PARTY." The Apostle St JUDE makes a
very excellent Observation with regard to this
Point, drawn from the Example of MICHAEL
the ARCHANGEL, who had an Adversary liable
enough to Exception, viz. the DEVIL; and yet
he would not bring even against him A RAILING
ACCUSATION. And indeed Calumnies and
spiteful Reflections do no Good in any Cause;
nay, generally they do more Mischief to the
Quarter from whence they come, than to those
against whom they are sent: For such sort of Ex-
pressions make no Impression upon any wise Man,
and can never convince, or bring over any Man.
These may make Men hate their Calumniators,
but they seem the worst-laid Expedients for to per-
suade them. But it is a Jest for Men to wish an
End to Factions and Conteſts, and to pray for U-
nity and Concord, whilst they are loading their
Adversaries with hard Names, and such heavy
Imputations, as serve only to keep up, and as
much

much as in them lies, to eternize the Quarrel. For one ill-natur'd Reflection begets another by way of Reprizal, and that again gives birth to a third, till the Faction, like the WIND, gathers Strength by Repercussion; and, what was at first in a manner harmless and imperceptible, rises by Degrees into the Fury of a STORM, and rends, and tears, and breaks all to Pieces before it. Scandalous Reports, and invidious Names of Distinction, are the Alarms to Faction; they are the Drums and Trumpets that give the Call to Sedition, and draw off Men from the common Interest to the particular Squadrons of their Party. But lay aside these, and Men fall in again into the publick Body; they go forwards in pursuing once more the common Good, till at last they are united both in Interest and Affection.

3dly, "ANOTHER Method of allaying FACTION, is, by setting aside OLD ANIMOSITIES." There will never an End be put to Differences, if the old ones be still brought to Account; and when Men are at present dispos'd to Quiet, they must

not be allow'd Quarter, by reason of their former Offences. Besides, in a long and lasting Faction, where Enmities are handed down, and, as it were, bequeath'd to Posterity, it is very unreasonable that a new Generation should be answerable for all the Irregularities committed by their Predecessors, and that we should revenge that upon them which their Fore-fathers have done. This is a Way to entail Quarrels upon our own Children, and to leave them to be reprized upon in the next Generation, for Unkindnesses we have done to other Men in this. To be for ever ruminating upon an old Injury; and, when Time begins to wear off both the Sense and Memory of the Offence, for us industriously to revive it, and it spite of Nature to keep up the Keeness of it, is, methinks, unnatural, and contrary to the very Frame of our Temper. Even PRINCES and STATES, who have the nicest Sense of Honour, and, for the Interest and Security of their Countries, stand obliged more particularly to resent Indignities offer'd; even they make Leagues and Alliances, without a Liquidation of antiquated Accounts: For, to scan over all these
with

with Exactness, would engage the World in an eternal War; and therefore I do not think but that it is a Duty incumbent upon their Subjects, to make as many Paces towards a Peace and Union among themselves at home, as their Superiors with relation to their Neighbours abroad.

4thly, "ANOTHER Method towards allaying
 " a FACTION in a NATION, is by setting
 " aside all PRIVATE INTEREST." Now
 whatever Men pretend, of either Side in a Faction;
 whether the Prerogative of the PRINCE, or the
 Privilege of the PEOPLE; the Good of the
 CHURCH, or the Welfare of the STATE; these
 are too often but specious Pretences, and Words
 without a Meaning: But the true Reason of all
 their angry Words, and spiteful Treatment of
 their Adversaries is, because they interfere with
 one another's Interest and Profit. Places of great
 Advantage are with greedy Expectance hunted
 after by some, whilst others are vexed with the
 Loss of them, or put themselves upon the worst
 Methods for retaining them. 'Tis from hence,
 that

that the loud Clamours and Accusations arise; 'tis this occasions the Suspensions of being disaffected to the CROWN, or else of bearing in upon popular LIBERTY; 'tis this which draws in all Friends and Dependents of great Men on both Sides, till whole Nations are in a Manner divided for the sake of a few ambitious Men, and do oftentimes ruin themselves to make others great. This has been the constant Method of Faction thro' all Ages: It was the Love of such Interest that led on CÆSAR, and POMPEY, and CRASSUS, to divide the Power of the whole ROMAN World between them: 'Twas this that rais'd such Jealousies and Discontents of corrupt and arbitrary Ministers on one Side, and designing Innovators on the other, till that mighty Empire was all blown up into a Flame, and for almost half an Age lay weltering in its own Blood. And we may reasonably presume, that this is the Case of Faction in our Age and Nation, and will be so in future Times. There will never be a Time in which some Men will not be aspiring to Power, and others endeavouring to support or supplant them

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in it ; unless it shall happen, as I believe it never will, that there be left no designing and no unthinking People in the World. 'Twas a sad Reflection that on the People of ROME, PANEM, & CIRCENSES, that they might be brought over to any Man's Interest by FEASTS and SHEWS ; but later Times have shewn, that Men can raise Parties without so much as the Virtue of LIBER-ALITY, and draw in People to quarrel for them, at the Expence only of PAMPHLETS, LIBELS, and seditious TALK.

5^{thly}, "THE last Method I shall propose for
" allaying FACTION, is a hearty ZEAL for the
" PUBLICK GOOD, and a sincere Concern for
" HOLINESS and true RELIGION." When
Men have only an Aim at the publick Welfare, they
can never be engaged in a Faction : For a Faction
is an uncertain Thing ; it either acts for or against
the publick Good, as the Leaders of it are disposed.
Nay, there is seldom a Faction of ten Years Con-
tinuance, but within that Space of Time it acts
inconsistently, and in Contradiction to itself.

There-

Therefore it is a good Way, (to lessen a Faction, and to avoid the Misfortunes and Levity of it) with a steady Eye, to pursue whatever a Man thinks, to the best of his Judgment, to be for the true Interest of the Nation ; and not to fall into it, because he sees others of his Party doing so before him, or to be against it, because others are for it whom he does not affect. This, if Men would do sincerely, tho' they should appear to be mistaken, GOD will never call them to an Account for it: Besides, the Numbers of the opposite Parties would continually decrease ; Men would pursue the Concerns of the Nation with as much Application as they do their own ; and the Honour and Power of our Country would grow as fast as private Fortunes. And so, if a Point be labour'd between the two contending Parties, let every Man seriously lay his Hand upon his Heart, and attentively consider, and ask his own Conscience impartially to speak what it judges to be most tending to the Glory of GOD, and the Advancement of true RELIGION. If they would do this upon every Difference between Party and Party and Party, I do verily believe,

lieve, in every Dispute, that four Parts in five of the Nation would be of one Side.----But to hasten to our third general Head,

III. To make some Application from what has been said with respect to ourselves, and the present State of Affairs.

I HAVE hitherto, in this Discourse, shewn the great Mischief which Faction brings to a Nation, and the most proper Methods of allaying it, drawn chiefly from the Observation I have made from ancient History, without any Strictures upon the unhappy Differences of our own Times. And the Arguments and Reasoning I have made Use of, are very obvious to every one's Understanding, and what most Men do of their own selves take Notice of; tho' few, thro' the Heat of Opposition, deduce them into Practice. And would to GOD these few Hints I have here cursorily given, may obtain such a Blessing of GOD upon them, as to awaken us into a better Temper, and to allay those unchristian Heats which have so discomposed us.

We

We of this Nation have unhappily stood divided, pretty nigh upon the same Footing, longer than any People I have met withal in Story ; even so high as Queen ELIZABETH's Time, the PURITANS began their Clamours against the CHURCH, who, being cherish'd too much by some Grandees in the COURT, by their Tumults and Libels, became at last formidable to the State. Unhappy Jealousies and Bickerings of this sort ran throughout one of the most peaceable Reigns, viz. of King JAMES the First ; and in the Time of his good, tho' unfortunate Son, nothing was seen but Sedition, and Plunder, and Sacrilege, and an Ocean of Civil Blood. And since THAT, even in later Reigns, we have been perplex'd with Plots and Rebellions ; and at present are under continual Apprehensions of an approaching ENEMY ; an Enemy that would endeavour to introduce Popery and arbitrary Power. May we therefore all of us join in Heart and Mind to oppose the Attempts of this our common Adversary ; and let us in THIS Reign revive the Glory of the LAST, when the well-affected Nobility and Gentry, City and Country, were all

stri-

striving who should go greatest Lengths for the Honour of their PRINCE, and the Interest of the NATION. And may GOD grant, that as it was the Happiness of that Reign to cripple the then exorbitant Power of the Disaffected in the Nation ; so may it be the distinguishing Glory of his present MAJESTY'S Reign, for the Security of our Religion, our Laws, and our Liberties, by the happy Success of our Arms, to prepare a Way for the Downfall of the PRETENDER to these Kingdoms.

'TWAS a noble Stand which his late MAJESTY made against Popery ; and I think his present most gracious MAJESTY hath shewn as great an Aversion to that foul Superstition our Adversaries would bind upon us ; and how great an Enemy he is to arbitrary Power, is at present sufficiently demonstrated, by his carrying on his Arms with so much Vigour and Courage against the common USURPER of the Rights of Mankind. Under his happy Government we all of us enjoy our Liberties, our Laws, and our Religion, and

those upon as firm a Security as can be desired. And what can any reasonable Man desire more? As for Offices of great Profit and Honour, they can be enjoy'd but by a few; and if the want of these was a Ground for Contention, there could be no End of quarrelling, till we became a Nation of MAGISTRATES, and OFFICERS of STATE. The best and wisest Way is, to leave the Disposal of these to our Superiors, who to be sure understand them best, and for the generality are more impartial than Men are wont to be in the Opinion of themselves. Upon the whole, therefore, let us avoid the being made Tools to ambitious Mens' Designs, and to be set on to worry one another, to manage other Peoples' Game, and in which there is not one in a Thousand of us shall find any Account. Let us live in a dutiful Subjection to the present GOVERNMENT, and in an entire Conformity to the ESTABLISH'D CHURCH.

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